



AN APPALACHIAN SYMPOSIUM

Essays written in honor of Cratis D. Williams

Edited by J. W. Williamson

*with an introduction by
Louie Brown*

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Introduction

Symposium, as defined by *The Random House College Dictionary*, has three general meanings. First, it is a meeting or conference for the discussion of some topic, especially a meeting at which several speakers discuss a topic before an audience. Second, it is a collection of opinions expressed or articles contributed by several persons on a given subject or topic. Third, it may be a party, usually following a dinner, for drinking and conversation. The Greek word for symposium actually means drinking together.

The introduction to this volume will focus on the first and second meanings of symposium, since a short discourse could not do justice to the third meaning. The nature of the collection of papers and restrictions on page length forbid a detailed introduction of each contribution to this volume; therefore, this attempt will be brief and will center around three major sections: first, background information on the nature of the conference which resulted in this symposium; second, a brief description of the organization of the volume; third, acknowledgments to those persons who contributed in time, effort, and resources to make the conference and this volume possible.

The Conference

The idea of *An Appalachian Symposium* came from the desire of a number of people at Appalachian State University to honor the retirement of a unique and unusual scholar, folklorist, teacher, and administrator who has devoted his life to writing and talking about Appalachia and to teaching and administration at Appalachian State University. It was believed that the uniqueness of this individual necessitated an honor atypical of the routine ceremonies used to pay tribute to one's long service. From this desire came the idea of An Appalachian Symposium in honor of Cratis D. Williams.

Although the planning of the event was carried out independent of his expertise and wisdom, the nature of the symposium came to reflect the diversity of the personality and interests of Dr. Williams. He has an interest in old and new approaches to research in Appalachia and is concerned about putting the people of Appalachia into context with other Americans. He has devoted much of his writing to the personality traits of

the people of Appalachia, has an interest in the literary tradition of the region, and is a living symbol of the oral tradition. Therefore, a symposium on a singular topic was impossible. Thus, the conference inevitably reflects the diverse background and interests of the person it honored and this volume must accept the appropriate label of *Festschrift*. It is indeed a collection of articles and essays contributed by many authors in honor of a colleague.

The papers submitted to the conference, the participants, and the geographic distribution of those attending the conference reflect the esteem of Dr. Williams plus his diverse interests. A total of eleven states were represented on the program and attendees from thirteen states were present.

Organization of the *Festschrift*

The conference was originally organized around four major topics: Appalachia in Context, The Appalachian Personality, Literary Traditions and Folklore, and The Oral Arts. Presentations at the conference were selected from among many proposals submitted to the editorial committee. Placement of the papers into the various categories was a difficult task and some papers worthy of presentation did not fit the designated categories; therefore, an additional topic, "Openings and Caveats," was added.

Readers of this collection will be able to argue that some papers are not cast according to topic. Do not be dismayed. There was not complete consensus among members of the editorial committee on the placement of papers under a particular topic. At the same time, most papers are representative of the general themes. Also, the reader will find that some papers under a particular topic may include contradictory descriptions and explanations. This is inevitable in a *Festschrift* built around general topics rather than a specific problem. (Two papers which were presented at the conference do not appear in this collection because they have already been published elsewhere: M. Thomas Inge, "The Appalachian Backgrounds of Billy De Beck's Snuffy Smith," *Appalachian Journal*, 4 [1977], 120-132; Charles W. Joyner, "Dulcimer Making in Western North Carolina: Creativity in a Traditional Mountain Craft," in *Material Culture in the South*, ed. Charles G. Zug, III, special issue, *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 39 [1975], 341-62.)

Openings and Caveats

One of the major controversies in Appalachian research and scholarship has been the numerous descriptions of people in Appalachia and the dearth of observation or hard data to validate these descriptions. The articles in this section are relevant to this issue. Ronald Eller focuses on the

use of oral history as a research tool, some of the problems incurred in its present use, and some new directions that may be taken to provide data on a changing Appalachia. Such data could be used by today's researchers to interpret the present nature of the region and could serve as vital information for the researchers of tomorrow to analyze the past.

Alan Crain's paper relates to the issue of conflicting reports on the people and the region. His thesis is that the background and assumptions of the observer-writer—the "side" taken by the writer, the audience to whom he is speaking, and where he comes from—must be known and clearly stated if we are to evaluate his or her assumptions.

Steve Fisher's "Folk Culture or Folk Tale" also focuses on the contradictory assumptions about the nature of Appalachia's people. He summarizes and evaluates the numerous criticisms of the Appalachian subculture model and concludes that the model should not be discarded. On the other hand, writers and researchers must exercise caution when discussing Appalachia as a subculture. Since many of the observations are undocumented, the model should be given serious scrutiny in order to judge its validity. Scholars are challenged to utilize other models which may offer different strategies for change to explain the conditions of the region.

Appalachia in Context

The landmark work that faced the issue of what is Appalachia and what is the nature of its people was John C. Campbell's *The Southern Highlander* which was published in 1921. It served as the major source of information on the region until *The Southern Appalachian Region*, edited by Thomas R. Ford, appeared in 1962, about the same time that *The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction*, the mammoth dissertation by Cratis Williams, was completed.

Each of these works delineates the region and presents a wealth of information on its characteristics and the nature of its people. The Ford volume is distinguished by the fact that it was an extensive survey. In the words of Rupert Vance, the Ford study was undertaken to examine the status of the region and of the component elements that determine its position, and to suggest the next steps possible in the various sectors of the region's economy, in its public life and services, its social institutions, and its ideas and beliefs. One conclusion of the study: "contrary to widely held opinion, the people of the Region largely share the attitudes and aspirations of Americans elsewhere." Ford, in the chapter on "The Passing of Provincialism," concludes that of all the important implications that may be drawn from the survey of attitudes, values, and beliefs, the most important is that the old stereotypes that have so long guided social action

in the region no longer apply to the great majority of the residents.

This conclusion possibly updates the work of Campbell, who concluded that the uniqueness of the people of Appalachia is due to the region's rurality and that the traits of Appalachian people are similar to the traits of rural people in other regions of the United States. The major problem with Appalachia is that it is more rural than other parts of the country.

The works of Ford and Campbell may contradict the vivid descriptions in *The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction*. The contradiction has less to do with the traits of the people than with the uniqueness of these traits and the explanation of this uniqueness. To Williams, the mountaineer is indeed unique, and he attributes this uniqueness to the mountaineer's ancestry and to geographic isolation. The inconsistencies in the works of Campbell, Ford, Williams, and many other writers were the principal motivation for this section of the volume. The reader will find that the attempt to put Appalachia in context has resulted in a number of papers that reflect the images of the region and its people presented by Ford, Campbell, Williams, and others.

Wilma Dykeman's paper, which bears the title of this section, seeks to put Appalachia into an international, American, and Southern context and concludes that the region has provided an alternative: first, to the generally accepted image known as the Solid South; second, to the notion of an ever progressing, inevitably successful, invariably happy America; and third, to the shadowy threat/opportunity of an emerging Third World "out there," pressing ever more forcibly upon our consciousness and our conscience.

In the article "Appalachia and the Idea of America," Shapiro treats the tendency of Americans to regard Appalachia as a strange land inhabited by a peculiar people. He traces the development of this tendency by examining the images depicted by local color writers, the tendency to identify Appalachia with the American past, the ambiguity violence brought to this identification with the past, the attempt to solve this ambiguity by identifying the violent aspects of mountain life as European rather than American in origin, and an attempt to abandon the doctrine that Appalachia represented a survival of the past for the doctrine that the social and cultural patterns were determined by the environment, mainly the absence of community. Shapiro concludes that the conflict between Appalachia and America today is not a conflict between past and present but between rural and urban ways.

Walls' "On the Naming of Appalachia" traces several developments that have influenced the delineation of the region. First, he covers the geographic nomenclature from the time of de Soto to the Civil War.

Second, he describes the attempts between the Civil War and 1900 to identify Appalachia as a cultural region, mainly by the local color writers. Third, Walls discusses the delineation of the region as a social problem area by educators and social reformers during the late 1800's and the early 1900's and by the federal government in the 1930's. Finally, he describes how the federal government "renamed" Appalachia as a social and economic development problem in the 1960's.

Wilhelm's "Appalachian Isolation: Fact or Fiction?" questions the notion that the distinctiveness of the Appalachian culture is determined by geographic isolation. He offers evidence that for the Blue Ridge area there was continuous contact with people moving in and out of the region. Wilhelm concludes that the mountain folk have always made contact with the outside world on a voluntary basis, and they continue to do so. If they were not "of the world" it is not because they were ignorant of the outside ways of life, but because they had seen it, reflected upon it, and almost totally rejected it.

Sessions' "Appalachians and Non-Appalachians" reviews the many stereotypes of the people of Appalachia and concludes that with the changes now taking place in the region, these stereotypes will break down and America will find that mountaineers are, after all, much the same as other human beings.

The Appalachian Personality

The writings on Appalachia, fact and fiction, directly or indirectly set forth certain stereotypes of the mountaineer. These stereotypes range from a romantic description of the frontiersman's glorified traits, of which religiosity is one, to a maladjusted, culturally deprived creature oriented to violence and any number of other nonglorified traits. The papers in this section offer a sampling of some of the personality traits that go to make up many of the stereotypes of the region and its people.

David Loeff's "Assisting Appalachian Families" focuses on the poor of Appalachia. An emphasis is placed upon certain attributes of the poor that result in apathy and serve as personal barriers to public and private health care. Strengths of the Appalachian family are also discussed and suggestions are made on how these strengths may be utilized to further implement personalized services for these families.

John Opie's "A Sense of Place" accepts the thesis that the mountaineer's feeling of belonging to a place is a central feature that sets him apart from mass society. Opie seeks to illustrate how the mountaineer's close association with the land extends the American frontier experience into the present day and how this frontier-like existence is based upon a long history.

In the article, "Old-Time Baptists and Mainline Christianity," Loyal Jones reviews the criticisms of mountain religious beliefs, practices, and values and then presents excerpts from interviews to illustrate that many of the characteristics of old-time Baptists are basically 200 years old and can be traced to sound scriptural bases. His major conclusion is that the beliefs of the old-time Baptists are out of kilter with modern religious thought. At the same time, there is a quality of life among them that ought to be understood and appreciated, not criticized.

McKinney's "Industrialization and Violence in Appalachia in the 1890's" traces the development of the mountaineer stereotype of violence by examining a series of spectacular events that took place at the end of the nineteenth century and the theories put forth to explain these violent events. He concludes that the mountain people are inherently no more violent than any other group of Americans and that the feuds and riots in the region can be much more adequately explained by an unusual convergence of social forces than by speculations about some theoretical mass personality.

Literary Traditions and Folklore

The Appalachian region has a rich heritage of literature and folklore. The uniqueness of the region emphasized by the local colorists and the dogooders, whether true or false, seems to have created a setting for writers within and without the region. In addition, the traditional beliefs, legends, and customs that make up the folklore have been a vital factor used to distinguish the region and have become subjects of much of the literature that has evolved from Appalachia or that has focused on it.

"The Observance of Old Christmas in Appalachia" by Chester Young traces the memory of Old Christmas which still lingers in the Southern Highlands, even though its observance is almost a relic of the past. He further concludes that changes in the region negate restoring the practice of the old custom. Yet the enduring values which the custom represents can be retained, cherished, and used by Appalachians to surmount hardships and to spend their lives in usefulness and contentment.

Robert Higgs' "Versions of Natural Man" is a literary analysis in which he relies upon the literature of the region to illustrate various versions of the natural man. His major conclusion is that the traits of character depicted by literature indicate that the Appalachian personality "contains multitudes," and among the throng are three types of natural man. He also concludes that the changes and the problems facing the region may necessitate the use of the traits of one of these as a prerequisite for the future of Appalachia.

"Bringing in the Sheaves" by Amos Abrams presents the Ray Collection of manuscript folk ballads and love poems that are a part of the folk heritage of Appalachia. The texts consist of social satire, temperance songs, and sentimental ballads, and represent the taste and preoccupations of one mountain family over the period of almost 100 years.

The Oral Arts

Every subculture in America probably has its oral tradition. Much attention has been focused on this tradition in Appalachia. Folk songs with origins in Europe have been passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. Story telling, especially in the form of Jack Tales, has been a tradition well documented. The survival of the language of the oral tradition has been of major interest to linguistic experts.

Jean Ritchie's "Growing Up in a Singing Family" is a vivid illustration of the importance of singing to Appalachian families and of how learning the music of the region was a natural and inevitable process. Ritchie draws upon a rich family tradition, and she offers here for the first time in print three songs and one tale transmitted to her years ago by a member of her Kentucky family. In "The Gap in Oral Tradition" Betty Smith offers evidence that this natural and inevitable process of learning the music and lore of the region has been interrupted, particularly by radio and television. She sees the loss of a singing tradition as symptomatic of what has happened to the quality of life in the region and concludes that the children are the losers.

Joan Moser's "Friday at Parhams' " is a description of an informal social gathering of a number of musicians and listeners. She concludes that such gatherings nourish a vital process of aural teaching, learning, and creating. Her article is an analysis of this process and the impact that it has on the arts and lives of the people involved.

In "The Southern Mountain Vocabulary in the Low Country of South Carolina and Georgia," O'Cain and Hopkins compare the survival of the same words in the vocabulary of mountain and non-mountain counties. They conclude that virtually every word cited as a characteristic of the Southern mountains also shows up in the plantation country of South Carolina and Georgia. The authors further conclude that the presence of these words in areas other than the Southern mountains have their historical roots in England, migration routes in America, and the social structure.

Acknowledgments

Dozens of persons at Appalachian State University were influential in making the conference and the publication of this volume a reality. A

steering committee was chaired by Dr. John Thomas, the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Members of the committee included Dr. Braxton Harris, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs; Mr. Ned Trivette, Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs; Mr. Robert Snead, Vice Chancellor of Development; Dr. James Jackson, Dean of the College of Continuing Education; Mr. Rogers Whitener, Director of Cultural Affairs; Mr. Borden Mace, Executive Director of the Appalachian Consortium; Dr. Jerry Williamson, Editor of the *Appalachian Journal*; and Dr. Louie Brown, Professor of Sociology. This committee provided guidance and moral support for a subcommittee charged with the responsibility of planning and initiating the conference, as well as financial resources necessary to make the conference and the publication of the papers a reality. Mr. Patrick Morgan, Director of the Oral History Project, deserves special recognition for his help in recording all the sessions, as does Miss Juanita Lewis, Assistant Editor of the *Appalachian Journal*, who helped prepare the papers for publication. Other individuals in the College of Continuing Education, the Center for Continuing Education, and the Oral History Project are too numerous to mention in spite of the major roles each played in planning and implementing the conference. Without the overwhelming response from writers and researchers, neither the conference nor the publication of the papers would have been possible. Without a doubt, the status and prestige of Cratis D. Williams, whom we honor with the conference and this volume, played an important role in the support received, both from the faculty and staff of Appalachian State University and from area scholars.

Louie Brown
Symposium Coordinator

Contents

<i>Introduction</i> , Louie Brown	v
<i>Appalachian Oral History</i> , Ronald D. Eller	2
<i>To Be a Sensitive Observer</i> , Alan J. Crain	8
<i>Folk Culture Or Folk Tale</i> , Stephen Fisher	14
<i>Appalachia in Context</i> , Wilma Dykeman	28
<i>Appalachia and the Idea of America</i> , Henry Shapiro	43
<i>On the Naming of Appalachia</i> , David S. Walls	56
<i>Appalachian Isolation</i> , Gene Wilhelm, Jr.	77
<i>The Common Bond</i> , Robert Paul Sessions	92
<i>Assisting Appalachian Families</i> , David Loeff, M.D.	102
<i>A Sense of Place</i> , John Opie	113
<i>Old-Time Baptists</i> , Loyal Jones	120
<i>Industrialization and Violence</i> , Gordon McKinney	131
<i>Old Christmas in Appalachia</i> , Chester Young	147
<i>Versions of "Natural Man,"</i> Robert J. Higgs	159
<i>Bringing in the Sheaves</i> , W. Amos Abrams	169
<i>Living Is Collecting</i> , Jean Ritchie	188
<i>The Gap in Oral Tradition</i> , Betty N. Smith	199
<i>Friday at Parhams'</i> , Joan Moser	206
<i>Southern Mountain Vocabulary</i> , Raymond O'Cain and John R. Hopkins	215

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Openings and Caveats

Appalachian Oral History: New Directions for Regional Research

RONALD D ELLER

John C. Campbell once wrote that Appalachia was "a land of promise, a land of romance, and a land about which, perhaps, more things are known that are not true than any part of our country."¹ Much has happened to change the region which Campbell so eloquently described in *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland*, but his insight more than five decades ago is still quite valid. Despite the plethora of books, articles, and government studies which have analyzed and categorized the region in recent years, the legacy of the mountain experience and the image of mountain life itself continue to be shrouded in myth and misconception. To borrow the title of a recent study, Appalachia is yet, in the popular mind, "A Strange Land and a Peculiar People."²

Part of the reason for the persistence of false images and misunderstanding about the Southern mountains is the critical deficiency of sound and interpretive scholarship on the history of the region. Because it was commonly believed that nothing "significant" had ever happened in the mountains, historians—and consequently history—have consistently passed the region by. Like so many other subcultural groups in American society, mountain people have rarely appeared as conscious actors on the stage of American history, and when they have appeared, it has been, more often than not, as "yesterday's people"—part of that "other America" which somehow missed the mainstream of American life. But, of course, Appalachia is America, as much as New England, California, Atlanta, or Chicago are America, and any history which fails to consider it as such distorts the meaning of our nation's past.

As written, therefore, the great mass of existing historical literature has simply failed to provide an authentic record of the mountain experience or of mountaineers' perceptions of that experience. Neglected by professional historians, Appalachian history has been reduced to popular legends and myths perpetuated in romantic novels, missionary tracts, and social surveys. Central to this reality is the fact that much of the traditional literature on mountain life has been written from the perspective of outsiders—people whose cultural views were more in line with the outer, mass society than with the culture of mountain people themselves. The received legacy of these accounts is one of a quaint, independent, backward race of

mountaineers who somehow existed for more than a hundred years in isolation from the rest of the world. The customs, values, and politics of the mountains, moreover,—the “way of life” of mountain people—have often been presented from the urban, middle-class perspective of the authors themselves rather than in relationship to the historical milieu of the mountain experience.

There are, to be sure, exceptions to this body of literature, but as a whole the traditional school of Appalachian history has done much to nurture the images of the mountains—the stereotypes that are commonly accepted by the mass of American society. These stereotypes are not only caged in myth and misconception, but also tend to perpetuate themselves, thus obscuring the true history of the region.

This is not to say that the traditional interpreters of the mountain experience *consciously* distorted it. Indeed, in most cases it was an unconscious act. We are all victims of cultural presumptions, and this impediment unconsciously affects the questions that we ask and the way that we interpret what we find. As a result of these presumptions, however, important questions about the dynamics of the mountain experience have not been asked. In order to explain the persistence of an endemic folk culture, for example, traditional monographs have often omitted or failed to emphasize certain aspects of mountain history which might project the region into the sphere of the national experience. Since the “peculiarities” of mountain culture were assumed to have evolved from years of relative isolation, there has been little impetus to look for other forces at work in the region’s history. Mountain people themselves have not been approached to record their perceptions of the many changes that have affected mountain society in the past century: changes such as the coming of railroads, the establishment of coal, lumber, mica, and other extractive industries, the growth of the cash economy, and migration patterns both within and out of the region—all of the changes concomitant with what Malcolm Ross called “The Machine Age in the Hills.” In short, the received literature of Appalachian history has failed to deal with the cultural, economic, and political forces of the mountain experience and has overlooked the very sources that can interpret that experience—mountain people themselves.

Aside from the problem of cultural presumptions, much of the problem of writing Appalachian history from a mountain perspective—and consequently American history from a proper multi-cultural perspective—has been the inadequacy of sources. The paucity of manuscript material from the mountain community is a major impediment to the regional historian. Because mountain culture—not unlike the larger society of the American South—has been a predominantly oral culture, the successes and failures,

the struggles and hardships of the lives of mountain people in their journey to the present day have seldom found their way into the documents from which history is written. Mountain people have simply left few diaries, journals, or autobiographical accounts. The recent trend toward the development of oral history programs in the mountains, however, promises to alleviate part of this obstacle to regional research. By the use of oral investigative techniques, the scholar can now develop additional sources with which to complement available documents. Used in conjunction with conventional research methods, oral sources can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of mountain history and thus record the reactions of mountain people to the impersonal forces of change in the last century.

As a historical document, therefore, the oral interview has tremendous potential, but only if the interview addresses a valid historical problem and if the sources are developed through a careful methodology that renders them usable and credible from a strict scholarly perspective. Like a written document, the oral source is only as good as the information it contains; but, although the historian has no control over the content of the written document, he plays a major role in shaping the oral source. For this reason, the questions the interviewer directs to the respondent are of crucial importance to the historical validity of the subsequent document. If the interview is to be significant history, it must deal with questions of broad historical relevance. If not, the transcript may lie idle for years and never be used for scholarly purposes.

Given the failure of the received historical literature and the critical need for a reassessment of the mountain past, the avenues for significant and relevant oral research are many. While we cannot project what the specific needs of future scholarship may be, we can anticipate some of the broad categories of sources upon which this scholarship may draw. In fact, by gathering a bank of oral sources on a wide variety of potential topics, we can help to channel the direction which future histories of our region will take. Such a bank would both preserve a valuable oral record and encourage regional scholarship as well. We would not only be creating new sources, but, in so doing, we would be creating history itself.

One of the major gaps in our historical knowledge today—and, perhaps, a good place for Appalachian oral history to begin—is the life and structure of the mountain community. In his presidential address to the Southern Historical Association in 1974 (appropriately entitled “Beyond the Mainstream: The Ethnic Southerners”), Professor George Brown Tindall noted that “we have been so caught up in deriving lessons from history and in searching for a usable past that we have neglected the living past of the community.”³ This, of course, is especially true of the moun-

tains, since for almost a hundred years outland scholars and social reformers have questioned the existence of "community" in our region altogether. Yet, as mountain people themselves are aware, community has played a formative role in the mountain experience, and, although it is not the same type of community one finds in urban, middle-class America, the mountain community has, through the years, served as an agency of socialization providing a sense of identity, a sense of belonging for mountain people.

There is much we do not know about the living past of the mountain community, and much which oral history can help us to understand. We know very little, for example, about the social structure of mountain communities, about the work patterns of mountaineers or about the history of education, recreation, and communication in our region. Indeed, ignorance abounds as to the fabric of the daily lives of mountain people and as to what is probably the most important institution of daily life—the family. Oral research into these and other topics such as child-rearing practices, kinship patterns, and the sex roles of men and women will certainly prove most instructive.

Clearly related to the life of the mountain community is the intriguing subject of mountain religion. As Elizabeth Hooker pointed out in 1931 and Earl D. C. Brewer confirmed in 1962, religion—although not necessarily the church—has played an important role in mountain life.⁴ It provided the philosophical base from which the mountain person found meaning for his or her life and from which people operated as they came in contact with the currents of mainstream life. Especially in the rural areas, moreover, religion was an integral part of the folk culture and was passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Religion—mountain religion—was part of the mountain mind. This religion developed in the mountains largely as an oral tradition, independent of professional clergy or formal church life. If this religious heritage (almost an ideology) is to be preserved, therefore, it must be gathered through oral techniques. Such research would naturally include the discussion of religious attitudes, the delineation of customs and practices and, of course, the gathering of old-time spirituals.

But if there are open spaces in the mountain past that scream out for serious study, there are also dark corners of that same past that similarly stand in dire need of investigation. Foremost among these is race relations. Although the black population has been small in the mountains, it has nonetheless played a significant role in the mountain experience. Black mountaineers have contributed not only to the folklore and music of our region but to the political, social, and economic history as well. Except for Professor William Lynwood Montell's book on Coe Ridge, however,

we know very little about the nature of the black experience in the mountains.⁵ Nor do we know much about the racial attitudes of mountain whites. Wilbur J. Cash in *The Mind of the South* portrayed the region as a hotbed of racial extremism and noted that the mountaineers who came down from the hills at the turn of the century "had acquired a hatred and contempt for the Negro even more virulent than that of the common white of the lowlands."⁶ On the other hand, Carter G. Woodson, the black editor of the *Journal of Negro History*, viewed the Southern mountains as a region of relative racial harmony, finding that in Appalachian America "the races still maintain a sort of social contact."⁷ Undoubtedly the truth lies somewhere between the two, but there is some evidence that a racial attitude existed in many areas of preindustrial Appalachia which was potentially less rigid than was the case in the rest of the South. Certainly systematic oral research into the relationship between whites and blacks, as well as between whites and native Indians in our region, will tell us much about the nature of the mountain mind.

What is true of race relations is almost equally true of politics in the mountains. We really don't know much about the history and operation of the political system in Appalachia. We have a few bits and pieces gathered from V.O. Key's *Southern Politics In State and Nation*, John Fenton's *Politics In the Border States*, and most recently Neil Peirce's *The Border South States*, but these are surely inadequate for understanding local politics and its effect on mountain life. The oral historian of mountain politics, therefore, is faced with myriad questions: What, for example, is the relationship between family kinship patterns and the exercise of political power in the mountains? Who are the "strategic elites" in our region and what are their sources of power? And what of mountain Republicanism? Although it has long been an anomaly in the Solid South, we really know little about its social base in the mountain community. Is the persistence of Republican loyalty, say in western North Carolina, due only to the strong ties of tradition, or is tradition buttressed with a political ideology as well? Properly approached, interviews with significant political figures in the mountains can provide much insight into the forces behind political actions—insight which is often unattainable through the written source.

Finally, there is an urgent need for oral research into the social history of the textile, coal, and lumber industries in our region. We have an abundance of material in company records, for example, from which to draw employment data, hours of work, and rates of wages in the mountain coal industry, but there are few accounts of the miner in the pit, in his home or in the community at large. Indeed, we need firsthand evidence from miners, lumbermen, and mill workers themselves if we are ever to record the impact of industrialization on the life patterns of the average moun-

taineer. We need to recognize, soberly but clearly, that these two kinds of sources—written records of employers and oral records of employees—differ radically in interpretation. They present the historian with subtle interpretive problems; but, as every good historian knows, a scholarly work based on a range of sources so narrow that these interpretive problems are missing is inherently flawed. Few survivors of these early industrial years will leave behind them any quantity of memoirs, diaries, or correspondence from which their economic and social history can be written. What evidence of the life and labor of these individuals future historians will have, therefore, depends upon the collection of oral sources today. Although such recollections would encompass only the life experiences of select individuals, by comparing each response with a collection of others, scholars will be able to detect persistent themes from which generalizations about the mountain experience as a whole can be made.

People act in the present partly as a function of what they perceive the past to have been—in short, as they perceive others before them acted. The way our children view the mountain past depends largely upon what we do today to preserve the oral sources from which tomorrow's history will be written. If we fail in this task we will be depriving them of the heritage which is rightfully theirs and of the confidence to act which that heritage can give them. The mountains are changing, and we can never regain what is lost. But we can move into the future more confident of our past and more secure in our present.

NOTES

¹John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1969), xxi; originally published by the Russell Sage Foundation, 1921.

²Henry D. Shapiro, "A Strange Land and Peculiar People: The Discovery of Appalachia, 1870-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers, 1966).

³George Brown Tindall, "Beyond the Mainstream: The Ethnic Southerners," *The Journal of Southern History*, 40 (February 1974), 14.

⁴See Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands* (New York: The Home Mission Council, 1933), and Earl D. C. Brewer, "Religion and the Churches," in *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*, ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962), 201-18.

⁵William Lynwood Montell, *The Saga of Coe Ridge: A Study in Oral History* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1970).

⁶Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1941), 219.

⁷Carter G. Woodson, "Freedom and Slavery in Appalachian America," *The Journal of Negro History*, 1 (April 1916), 140.

On the Attempt to be a Sensitive Observer in Appalachia

ALAN J. CRAIN

This work grew out of my two-month residence in a section of Appalachia. The intent is to provide a perspective on my observations of certain aspects of life in that region, one which, it is argued, ought to be applied by all writers on the area, insiders as well as outsiders. Although both may feel they are "telling it like it is," yet each operates from a perspective. That perspective, and the way it influences what is said (and how), must be understood by any individual wishing to learn about the area through the printed page.

It will be a thesis of this paper that the background and assumptions of an observer-writer must be known and clearly stated, if we are to evaluate his or her productions. Stated in its simplest, it could be put as Howard Becker did in an address to a group of social scientists in 1966: "Whose Side Are We On?" Stated only slightly differently, it might be phrased "for whom do we speak?" and "where are we coming from?" Some writers very consciously label their stance. Some label it, but tuck it away in an appendix on "Method."

The issue of "whose side" not only permeates the conclusions drawn and the interpretations advanced but begins far earlier in the research process. Perhaps not so unwittingly, one chooses his or her methodology to enhance the possibility of arriving at sought-for conclusions, and then, eager to share his or her findings, one rapidly rushes into print, managing in the process to exploit, this time through faulty observation, interpretation, and generalization, a region of the country which has already experienced several waves of this phenomenon.

Two months is a short space of time. Much as one may wish to share, and eagerly, some of his "data" from that time, he would do well to take the advice of Robert Coles to "slow down, hear more, and above all, keep your psychiatric [translate "sociological" in the present author's context] mouth shut."¹

Let me state the basic questions or "problems" to be examined here, suggesting they are only some of the questions which should be asked of published work on this region, and then state my own "standpoint" or "bias":

1. selectivity of focus ("how generalizable is it?")
 - a. what phenomena are being examined?
 - b. who are the respondents—subjects?

- c. what theoretical perspective or orienting framework is being used?
2. the audience or potential audience ("who's going to read it?")
3. the observer/writer's stance, assumptions, perspective ("how does the observer see it?")
4. words, terms, and their connotations ("what do the words mean?")

All of these may fairly adequately be subsumed under Howard Becker's title, "Whose Side Are We On?"

Since it is being argued here that an observer's perspectives will color his or her work, it seems appropriate immediately to state where this author is "coming from." (I beg your indulgence for the switch to the first person singular at this point. Carefully to avoid its use is a maneuver that "coolly" avoids the issue.) It was I and no one else who spent time with the particular persons in a particular geographical area. I was the one who for two months lived in a small four-room house without indoor bath that many will want to call a "tarpaper shack," sharing it, through their generosity, with Joe and Sue Ann (as I'll call them here) and their four kids. It was I, with my own idiosyncratic background and mind-set, who semi-participated as a boarder, observing and trying to understand how these folks organized aspects of their lives, particularly family and religious behavior. And it was I who chose (with their help) to live with this particular family and not with some other and not by myself. What I am trying to say, and as forcefully as possible, is that what follows comes from limited (though in some sense intensive) personal contact with Appalachia, and that on the part of one with a particular set of background assumptions and perspectives. Let me try, briefly, to elucidate some of my own background, familial, academic, and personal, which I believe has affected my current perspective.

Most of my childhood was spent in India and Burma, where my Protestant missionary parents sent me to a Christian boarding school largely populated by Western children. Semi-isolated from the surrounding majority culture, we nevertheless had contacts through classroom studies (mandated by the national government) and with the several Indians on the staff and with non-Western classmates. My undergraduate and graduate studies in sociology were oriented, to a large extent, around trying to understand "minorities" of various sorts. And I found myself more attracted to the symbolic interactional than to any other single theoretical framework. In this, the very conscious attempt is made to get inside the outlook and perceptions of others, to see things as they see them. There was an abortive attempt to become a social worker, in which phrases like "doing with rather than for," "helping relationship," and "taking the client where he/she is" rang true to my ears. A large share of

my teaching of undergraduates I can label as the attempt to increase appreciation and understanding for ways other than those my students might consider "normal," "natural," and "right."

Thus, as I went to Knox County, Kentucky, for a two-month stay, there was some of the romantic in me. I was "set up" by background and training to look for differences, and to be primed to apply the sympathetic, sensitive, understanding eye and heart to them. I was, if you will, looking for things.

Perhaps it was Sue Ann, the mother in my Kentucky family, who put my quest best. I'd gone to the area six months prior to my stay, hoping to contact a family who would have me as a boarder. Sitting on their front porch that evening, I tried to say as directly as I could the object of my visit—to see with my own eyes whether things I'd read about the area were true and to use this in my teaching. How succinctly Sue Ann put it: "Oh, so you can tell it like it is, right?" I wish I believed it were possible to tell it precisely as it is. But the brunt of this present exercise is to suggest that try as one might, he or she cannot tell it "like it is," but only through his own preconception-laden eyes. James Branscome tells us that "in responding to the Appalachian culture, outsiders are sometimes incapable of interpreting the evidence because of their own training in research procedures."² Both "research procedures" and theoretical perspective, I am suggesting, are guides to seeing and understanding, but each can equally operate as a blinder.

That I came to love Joe, Sue Ann, and their four kids Jim, Betsy, Ed, and Jeannie, probably goes without saying. My own choice of terms to describe their behavior and attitude toward me would include warm, genuine, accepting, with a fine admixture of fun and merriment and kidding added. And yes, let me state it here, though they differed from me in being rural, low income, mountain-reared, I found far more underlying similarity than difference between them and me. I find little difficulty, thus, in agreeing with Rupert Vance that "the mountain man has about the same attitudes and personality we would have if we were in his situation."³ Nevertheless, I can find enough differences to be able, at least intellectually, to understand those who label them "quaint." Nevertheless, I must agree with a Kentucky-born minister, now working with Appalachians in a Northern city, who said, "It's just that too much can be made of those differences."⁴

Having introduced myself and my Kentucky experience, let me present the argument on the taking of sides. The social scientific literature contains a wealth of material on observer bias, perspectives, and "value-free" sociology. Howard Becker, in an address to a professional society in the social sciences in 1966, came out clearly on the side of those he terms "un-

derdogs." Becker puts it bluntly: "I propose to argue that it is not possible to do research that is uncontaminated by personal and political sympathies."⁵ Research emerges at least in part from the interests and "concerns" of the author. They need to be acknowledged, Becker suggests. I agree. Becker further suggests, however, that these interests may lead to "too great a sympathy with the people studied."⁶ Some sociologists believe that "whatever sympathies they feel are not professionally seemly."⁷ Becker replies that "we can never avoid taking sides....We take sides as our personal and political commitments dictate, use our theoretical and technical resources to avoid the distortions that might introduce into our work, limit our conclusions carefully,...and field as best we can the accusations and doubts that will surely be our fate."⁸

It probably is inevitable that accusations will arise, and most of us will doubtless be aware of a host of these. Becker suggests that when we take sides we are operating in a stratificational framework of superordinate and subordinate groups. Each side has its own point of view or credible outlook, and these are arranged in a hierarchy. Thus, it is hardly surprising when those parties whose view has not been incorporated feel left out. This can easily lead to charges of bias, unrepresentativeness, and indeed unfairness on the part of an author.

Becker reminds us that one seeking to understand society must get into a situation long enough to have a perspective on it.⁹ I suggest that it is inevitable for one to come to a situation with a perspective already worked out. If this is too rigidly (or methodically) set, it may be very hard to shake. No matter what the participants in the situation do (or do not do), the observer can twist and rationalize their actions to fit into his or her own framework of meaning.

It is relatively easy, as some authors have done,¹⁰ merely to identify one's viewpoint and stance early in a work, or even relegate it to an appendix, and let it go at that. I argue with Alvin Gouldner who suggested that Becker did not go far enough, that "it is complacency which allows us to think that we have solved the problem by good-naturedly confessing that yes, we do indeed have a standpoint and by openly specifying what it is."¹¹ We must do as Robert Coles¹² so admirably does, keep reminding the reader, on practically every page of our work, how we, the observer/translator, enter into the picture of whatever is being described, much less interpreted. It is not enough to "pawn off a merely glib statement about our values,"¹³ as Gouldner reminds us. One must work at this. It is not automatic. Over and over, I had to remind myself that it was I, a non-Appalachian, non-rural, non-poor person, who was observing. Even as I would write field notes and then glance over them, the very words chosen to describe behavior, much less attitudes or imputed motives

for observed behavior, seemed loaded. Perhaps an example will help illustrate the point. When twelve-year-old Ed, climbing the mountain with me, found a discarded object that was spring-loaded, how was I to describe the time he spent playing with this, pretending it was a hypodermic syringe, and giving inoculations to all around, most particularly his little sister who squealed and ran? Was this a kid who lacked the more expensive playthings of an advanced (so-called) society, and was forced back on a discard? Was his method of play to be interpreted as hostile, aggressive, or ingenious? Was the fact that he spent hours at this, finally interesting Dad and older brother in dismantling the gadget, to be seen as perseverance by a child of perhaps low intelligence? Or did it show perseverance, a "laudable" ability to stick with a topic?

Let us look at one more example. On another evening this same Ed spent about three hours trying to perfect the making of a cat's cradle from a loop of string, as Granny across the road showed him. Do we speak with admiration of the lack of many other playthings around? Or do we sigh with pity for the poor little guy who has so few things to occupy himself? The point here is that it is very difficult to get within another's perspective without warping it in the process.

We must be aware, then, as Gouldner urges, that when sides are taken, we are "also on our own side....Our objectivity does not require us to share values with those we study....The values that we may actually hold may differ,"¹⁴ and we must openly acknowledge and use this fact.

So I would not suggest that a two-month stay with one Kentucky family has enabled me to take their perspective. I went there with a perspective of my own, and it affected (infected?) both my viewing and the words I choose in my reporting. But I do think that having participated, at least minimally, in the lives of what may pass for a somewhat typical Appalachian family, I have gained a greater sensitivity to their own perspectives, and that far better than had my chosen research tool been the interview or the questionnaire. And yes, it was gratifying to have them respond, "Al, don't change a word," when I showed them this completed manuscript, asking them for any changes needed before it saw eyes beyond those of myself, my wife, and my typist.

Gouldner, in talking of taking sides, uses terms like "emotional commitment," "sentimentality," and "passion." I add the term "sensitivity," and suggest, with him, that while any of these phenomena may produce intellectual blindness, in the hands of an aware, alert, and perceptive observer, they "may just as likely serve to enlighten, and to sensitize us to certain aspects of the social world." I could, perhaps, have attempted not to feel for and with my Kentucky family, attempting to be the "sentiment-free social scientist" as Gouldner phrases it, but I conclude that ap-

proaching them as I did, I did indeed become "sensitized to certain aspects of their social world." And yes, I guess I would add as my second and final conclusion the Biblical injunction "go thou and do likewise."

NOTES

¹Robert Coles, *The South Goes North* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 394.

²James Branscome, "Annihilating the Hillbilly: The Appalachians' Struggle with America's Institutions" (Huntington: Appalachian Movement Press, n.d.), 14.

³Rupert Vance, "An Introductory Note" to Jack E. Weller, *Yesterday's People* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1966), viii.

⁴Coles, 405.

⁵Howard Becker, "Whose Side Are We On?" *Social Problems*, 14 (1967), 239.

⁶Becker, 239.

⁷Becker, 240.

⁸Becker, 247.

⁹Becker, 245.

¹⁰Part of a larger work from which the present essay is drawn includes a survey of some of the better known field studies of Appalachia. It is indeed provocative to see how, if at all, authors have utilized space in a published work to handle questions such as those being explored here, and to ascertain their physical placement (and thus symbolic importance) relative to other portions of the published work.

¹¹Alvin Gouldner, "The Sociologist as Partisan: Sociology and the Welfare State," *American Sociologist*, 3 (1968), 112.

¹²Coles, *The South Goes North*.

¹³Gouldner, 112.

¹⁴Gouldner, 104.

Folk Culture or Folk Tale: Prevailing Assumptions About the Appalachian Personality

STEPHEN L. FISHER

Ten years have passed since the publication of Jack Weller's *Yesterday's People*.¹ Weller identifies the traits of a Southern Appalachian folk culture which he claims has failed to prepare its people for the cooperative, interrelated, technical society in which they now live. Weller's descriptions and prescriptions have shaped the discussion of the Appalachian personality by scholars and laymen both in and out of the Appalachian region. This has occurred despite the fact that Weller's descriptions are largely unproven and abound with contradictions and that his prescriptions have had some damaging consequences for the Appalachian people.

It is not that Weller's hypotheses have gone unchallenged. But, as Helen Lewis points out, the attack on what she calls the Appalachian subculture model has been disjointed and confined mainly to mimeographed underground publications, "movement" newsletters and obscure journals.² Those concerned with Appalachian culture and the future of the Appalachian people need to examine more closely the prevailing assumptions about the existence of a unique Appalachian subculture.

The following analysis may encourage others to explore alternative models for explaining and coping with Appalachia's problems.

Jack Weller and those influenced by him claim that there exists in Southern Appalachia a folk culture which consists of traits quite different from those held by middle-class Americans.³ These traits include individualism, traditionalism, fatalism, action-seeking, and person-orientedness.

Weller and many other observers of mountain culture pay little attention to why these traits developed and how they are passed from generation to generation. When explanations for the cultural traits are mentioned, they include isolation of the Appalachian people from the mainstream culture, the close-knit nature of the mountain family, religious fundamentalism, migration of potential leaders from the mountains, and

adaptation to the difficult situations in which Appalachians have found themselves.

The traits of the folk culture, claims Weller, are largely responsible for the problems which plague the Appalachian area—poverty, poor health care, low educational achievement, emotional disturbances, violence, poor government, and welfare dependency. Furthermore, efforts to alleviate these problems often fail because of the Appalachian's resistance to new ideas, reluctance to work cooperatively, lack of goals, fatalism, suspicion of outsiders, and distrust of bureaucracies of all types. As a result, simply pumping money into Appalachia will not solve the problems of the area. The folk culture must be changed before substantial social progress can occur. The mountain people are unable and often unwilling to change themselves. Outsiders must provide the stimulus and instruments for revamping the culture. Change agents include ministers, teachers, public health nurses, social workers, recreation leaders, psychiatrists, and government planners. Instruments of change encompass new educational and religious programs, kindergartens, bookmobiles, vocational schools, birth control programs, planning commissions, and an expanded highway system.

Criticisms of the Appalachian subculture model can be discussed on five levels: (1) the uniqueness of the subculture; (2) those included in the subculture; (3) accurate portrayal of the subculture; (4) forces which have given rise to and perpetuated the subculture; and (5) strategies for change suggested by proponents of the subculture model.

Dwight Billings maintains that the distinctiveness and importance of the Appalachian subculture have been overemphasized.⁴ The first serious attempt to determine whether or not a distinct subculture exists in Appalachia was by Thomas Ford in an essay entitled "The Passing of Provincialism."⁵ Ford set out to determine the strength of four values—individualism and self-reliance, traditionalism, fatalism, and religious fundamentalism—among the Appalachian people. His findings do not support the belief that traditionalism, individualism, or fatalism are core cultural values in Appalachia. Rather, Ford concluded that the region had become " 'progressive-minded' and 'achievement-oriented' to a surprisingly high degree."⁶

Billings' own research casts further doubt on the uniqueness of an Appalachian subculture. He produces a scale of "middle-class orientation" from a secondary analysis of data gathered from several thousand respondents in North Carolina. He found that attitudinal differences between respondents from the Appalachian section of that state and from the other

regions were quite small and could be attributed to rurality. From his interpretation of this data he concludes that attitudinal characteristics cannot be used to explain the existence of poverty in the mountains. While Billings' evidence is not conclusive, his point is well taken. The burden of proof rests on those who claim that a unique folk culture exists in Appalachia. As of now, they have failed to provide convincing evidence that the folk culture they describe actually exists.

Proponents of the subculture model have also failed to make clear exactly who in the mountains shares the traits of the folk culture. Weller and many other students of mountain culture have tended to attribute the traits of the folk culture to the people of Appalachia in a somewhat blanket fashion.⁷ This has resulted in much confusion and the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes.

Weller, for example, says that there is a middle class and professional class in the mountains, and that both have the same characteristics of these classes elsewhere. But, he continues, most people living within Appalachia have come out of the folk culture and share its traits to a certain degree.⁸ To what degree? Weller gives no answer. Are the characteristics of the Appalachian middle class closer to American middle-class culture or to the folk culture? Again, no answer is provided.

Confusion also results from the fact that the description of the folk culture is similar in many ways to Oscar Lewis' discussion of the culture of poverty. According to Lewis, the culture of poverty is

a label for a specific conceptual model that describes in positive terms a subculture of Western society with its own structure and rationale, a way of life handed on from generation to generation along family lines....It is a culture in the traditional anthropological sense in that it provides human beings with a design for living, with a ready made set of solutions for human problems and so serves a significant adaptive function.⁹

To scholars like Edward Banfield, the culture of poverty is shared by a lower class which is characterized by "pathological" traits—such as present-orientedness and action-seeking behavior—which combine to keep people poor.¹⁰ The implications of the culture of poverty and the folk culture are the same—people's values must be changed.¹¹

Weller describes a lower class in Appalachia that is mired in the culture of poverty. But, he says, this Appalachian lower class differs from the Appalachian folk class. Unfortunately, Weller fails to identify the differences except in the broadest of generalities. The lower class has only disadvantages while the folk class has several advantages. The lower class is worse off, more suspicious of outsiders, and will require more help than the folk class. At the same time, the lower class is less resistant to change than the folk class.¹² It is not surprising that many scholars who rely upon

Weller's discussion of Appalachian culture tend to view the lower class and the folk class as one.

The failure to clearly define who participates in the folk culture has given rise to the view that Appalachia has a homogeneous culture. Critics of Weller insist that there exist in Appalachia several lifestyles with distinctive group identities and behavior patterns. Certain questions, say these critics, must be answered before an accurate picture of mountain culture is possible. What types of status or class groupings exist in Appalachia? How many subcultures exist? What are the characteristics of the classes and subcultures? What is the relationship between particular classes and subcultures in the mountains? What type of interaction occurs among classes?

Much more research is needed before these questions can be satisfactorily answered. There are, however, several people who have begun to search for some answers. One is Helen Lewis, who tries to document the existence of a rural mountain subculture, a coal mining subculture, and a town subculture in Appalachia.¹³ Bill Best believes that both a traditional mountain culture and a culture of poverty exist in Appalachia.¹⁴ The traditional mountain culture, says Best, has been geared to subsistence living. During the early mining period, many mountain families left their small hillside farms and moved into coal camps. The coal companies were very paternalistic and the families became very dependent on them. During the hard times which followed, the families in company towns did not have the farms and farming skills which had sustained their ancestors to fall back on. Thus they migrated to cities or became dependent on private and public welfare and relief organizations. Those who found some type of work and avoided going on welfare constitute what Best calls the traditional mountain culture. Their basic cultural mode is subsistence, which fosters independence. Those who had to go on welfare and remained there, he classifies as a culture of poverty. Their mode is dependency:

People of both cultures share many of the same values and one uninitiated to the ways of the mountains probably couldn't tell the difference between the two. While both groups are individualistic to a degree, traditionalism is less dominant in the culture of poverty. Those in the culture of poverty have less to lose when change comes to the social order and they can usually be found willing to join many of the new programs which have proliferated in the region since the early sixties.¹⁵

John Stephenson, using occupation as his criterion, identifies four "family types" in a mountain community he calls Shiloh.¹⁶ What he found in Shiloh, and suspects to be true for similar areas elsewhere, is that the four types of families participate in a traditional mountain subculture in different ways and to different degrees. There are, he says, a number of families in Appalachia today which are living "under two flags," in the

midst of a transition from a "traditionalistic kind of cultural background into a modern kind of present and future."¹⁷ Finally, Harry Schwarzweller and his colleagues have conducted a thirty-year longitudinal study of an Appalachian community called Beech Creek. Although all the families in Beech Creek are quite poor, the authors found that social class differences were evident in family reputation, visiting patterns, marital exchanges, and territorial locations.¹⁸

In spite of Billings' findings and the lack of clarity concerning who possesses what traits, most observers of Appalachian culture are convinced that a distinctive Appalachian subculture exists. Some critics charge that Weller and most other students of the mountain personality have done an inadequate job of portraying this subculture. Roger Lesser points out that while Weller claims to present an objective analysis of Appalachian culture, he emphasizes only the dramatic and destructive elements of the culture.¹⁹ Studies of mountain culture seldom focus attention on such Appalachian traits as neighborliness and hospitality, love of place, modesty, bravery, sense of humor, loyalty, resourcefulness, and patriotism.²⁰ Such studies often fail to examine the benefits which result from placing a higher value on people over objects, continuity over change, and individualism over group participation. They frequently overlook Appalachian examples of cooperative activity, routine and stability, and the acceptance of change.

Many of the mountaineer's "negative" or "destructive" traits are negative and destructive only when judged by middle-class standards. For example, Jack Weller claims that "existence-oriented" Appalachian society does not have the secondary goals of "beauty, excellence, and refinement." Yet, as Bill Best points out, Appalachians do have these goals; they are just expressed in ways different from those of the "improvement-oriented society."²¹ The Appalachian individual, rather than striving for excellence in corporate relationships, might turn his drive for excellence into being a good coon hunter, vegetable gardener, or story teller. The mountaineer's sense of beauty is expressed in good craftsmanship, the preservation of the great ballads and tales of English literature, and the use of the simile and metaphor in song, story, and speech. The negativism of many of the studies is revealed by the choice of words used to describe certain traits. Why is the mountaineer's "what will be, will be" most often described as "fatalism" rather than "contentment" or "realism"?²² In sum, the traits of the Appalachian personality are frequently discussed with little understanding of the culture in which they are dominant.

Contradictions abound within many analyses of the Appalachian culture. Ernest Austin discusses just a few of the contradictions in *Yesterday's People*:

Weller tells the reader that mountain people are "place bound," then laments their migratory habits; he states that they are so independent as to disdain group cooperation, then speaks of their emotional dependence upon group and community agreement....Mountain teenagers find life dull partly because they have nothing to do, but there is little delinquency "partly because the rural nature of the area provides plenty of room to work off pent-up emotions" via hiking, fishing, exploring, hunting, etc....The author explains that the people fiercely reject change of any kind, and then he later demonstrates how they readily accept and become attached to changes....²³

If Appalachians are present-oriented and fatalistic, why have hundreds of thousands left the mountains for the cities in search of a better future? If mountaineers will not cooperate and join groups, why is West Virginia the most unionized state in the nation?²⁴ Proponents of the subculture model should deal with these and other contradictions before their analysis and suggestions for change are accepted.

Some critics, especially Helen Lewis, charge that proponents of the Appalachian subculture model confuse description for analysis. Weller and others begin with the assumption that a unique subculture exists and then proceed to fill in the description of that subculture. This leads to confusion over the purpose of the description. If, as it often appears, the purpose is to explain how the subculture is responsible for poverty and other Appalachian problems, then emphasis should be placed on the factors which have led to the particular behavioral patterns described as belonging to those in the Appalachian subculture. If, on the other hand, the purpose is to identify the effects of the problems on the subculture, emphasis should be placed on how these behaviors are transmitted from one generation to another. Pure description, says Lewis, does neither. It does not tell us why the problems prevail or why the problems cause certain values, norms, or behaviors of the people.²⁵

Culture is more than just description, says Lewis. It refers to a set of normative patterns which arise through a group's interaction with its environment. By discussing culture in isolation from the social, economic, and political setting, most studies portray the Appalachian people as the passive and apathetic carriers of the destructive traits of their culture. Such a picture, insists Lewis, is misleading. The cultural traits of the mountain people cannot be understood apart from the conditions that shaped them and the processes that perpetuate them. Appalachia, she suggests, may be viewed

as a subsociety structurally alienated and lacking resources due to processes of colonialism and exploitation. Those who control the resources preserve their advantage by discrimination. The people are not essentially passive but these subcultural traits of fatalism, passivity, etc., are adjustive techniques of the powerless; ways in which people protect their way of life from new economic modes and the concomitant alien culture. These values are reactions to powerlessness.²⁶

This perspective leads to an interpretation of the Appalachian people

and institutions quite different from that of Weller's. For example, some of the characteristics and "problems" attributed to the family and church by Weller and others could be traced to a process whereby the family and church have tried to resist or adapt to a history of colonial exploitation. Helen Lewis, Linda Johnson, and Sue Kobak suggest that the family system may have served as a defensive mechanism against outside interference by becoming a refuge for its members, opposing certain changes, developing sabotage techniques, overprotecting children, becoming exclusive and closed, and serving as a center for "underground" mountain culture.²⁷ Perhaps most importantly, the family may have encouraged biculturalism. Lewis believes that mountain children have been taught to act proper in public and be "hillbilly" at home. When they must,

Appalachians passively enact the behavior of mainstream culture in settings of formalized intergroup contact: at the welfare office, in court, and at school. It is in such cases that the mainstreamer is limited to a single cultural system whereas the Appalachian is bicultural and bidialectical.²⁸

Colonialism as an explanation for the underdevelopment of Appalachia has been most often applied to the coal mining regions of the mountains. Helen Lewis, relying heavily on Robert Blauner's analysis of colonialism in relation to Black Americans,²⁹ provides informative research. Blauner defines colonialism as "domination over a geographically external political unit most often inhabited by people of a different race and culture, when this domination is political and economic, and the colony exists subordinated to and dependent upon the mother country."³⁰ While admitting that some characteristics of colonies do not apply to Appalachia, Lewis believes that the history of the region provides evidence to support the view that the four major steps of the colonialization process identified by Blauner have occurred in Appalachia. These are (1) a forced or involuntary entry; (2) a rapid modification of the culture and social organization of the colonized; (3) control by the dominant group; and (4) a condition of racism, social domination, by which the colonized are defined as inferior or different and which rationalizes the exploitation, control, and oppression by the superordinate group.

There is not space to examine Lewis' evidence. She concedes that important questions remain and that much research is required before they can be answered. It can be said, however, that the colonial analogy is gaining attention and respectability as more becomes known about who controls the resources of Appalachia.³¹

The debate over the Appalachian subculture model would not be of much significance except that the persons and agencies concerned with fighting the conditions of poverty in the mountains have accepted this view of Appalachia and the strategies of change which it implies. The result, as

Mike Maloney and Ben Huelsman point out, has been a focus "not on what the rest of society is doing to the Appalachian but rather on what the Appalachian is supposed to be doing to himself through his own defective value system."³² There has been little questioning of the manner in which the institutions of the region serve and affect the people because there has been agreement that the values of the people are at fault. It is these values which must be changed before poverty can be eliminated.

An acceptance of the colonial analogy implies the need for a radical change in the Appalachian economic and political structure. One need not, however, accept the validity of the colonial model in order to be critical of the subculture model's assumptions about change. The dangers of relying solely upon a cultural explanation for the poverty of a particular group of people has been documented by William Ryan in his book, *Blaming the Victim*.

Ryan is writing primarily about an urban environment, but his remarks are relevant to Appalachia. Victim-blaming, says Ryan, is a warped logic that enables well-meaning middle-class liberals and humanitarians to believe that the characteristics of people themselves are the fundamental causes of problems such as poor education and poor health care. Victim-blaming involves a four-step process. First, identify a social problem. Second, study those affected by the problem and discover in what ways they are different from the rest of us as a consequence of deprivation and injustice. Third, define the differences as the cause of the social problem itself. Fourth, assign a government bureaucrat to invent a humanitarian action program to correct the differences.³³

It should be obvious that this process is at work with the Appalachian subculture model. Consider just one victim—the miseducated child in an Appalachian school. A problem certainly exists. As many as 65 per cent of Appalachian students drop out of school before graduation. A higher proportion of Appalachian students than elsewhere consistently fail the Selective Service entrance tests.³⁴ The subculture model blames the child for his inability to read and write well and for his disinterest in school. The child has no interest in books because there are none in his home. He hesitates to talk in class because he soon realizes that his parents have taught him to speak incorrectly. He is unable to relate to the school system or his teacher because he has been overprotected by his family. He is often absent from school because his family encourages him to stay at home. The child, in other words, contains within himself the causes for his miseducation. The solutions implied by this perspective include pre-school training in order to weaken family influence, social workers to educate the mother about the value of reading and education, and vocational schools for the many who drop out of school by the ninth grade.

This perspective tends to ignore the effect on students of inadequate facilities, irrelevant texts, insensitive and ill-prepared teachers, misguided curriculums, overcrowded classes, and stingy taxpayers. It tends to overlook a political system in which schools are a source of power and income—a situation which produces local leaders who permit and even encourage irrelevant education.³⁵ By trying to remedy defects in the child's culture, proponents of the subculture model are treating the symptoms, not the roots of the problem. They are applying what Ryan calls an "exceptionalistic" rather than a "universalistic" approach to the analysis and solution of social problems. They are promoting remedial treatment to a specially-defined category of persons who are afflicted with a unique "disease," rather than trying to prevent a disease that is a result of the social arrangements of the community and is not unique to a special group. The exceptionalist viewpoint is reflected in solutions that are private, voluntary, special, local, and exclusive, while the universalist viewpoint is reflected in solutions that are public, legislated, general, national, and inclusive.³⁶

Blaming the victim for his problems can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy. As Helen Lewis points out, the wide acceptance of the Appalachian subculture model may have helped to create an Appalachian subculture by convincing the Appalachian that he is inferior, backward, and has "bad" values.³⁷ She sums up the feelings of most of the critics of the subculture model when she states that "the wholesale and intemperate acceptance and promulgation" of the subculture model and the strategies of change implicit in it have been "extremely pernicious and wasteful of money." It is, she concludes, "untenable and unjust to characterize Appalachian culture patterns as deficient or pathological versions of mainstream American culture."³⁸

A review of the criticisms of the Appalachian subculture model does not lead to the conclusion that the model should be discarded—that it has nothing of value to contribute to the analysis of social problems in Appalachia. Indeed, several of the criticisms are contradictory. Each alone is incomplete and requires further study. Yet, each identifies a serious deficiency of the subculture model. Together they indicate that one should exercise great caution in accepting, without reservation, the conclusions and recommendations of the proponents of the model.

Many of the myths and stereotypes about Blacks and women in our society have been discredited in recent years as a result of both a critical reexamination of the underlying assumptions of earlier studies and in-depth scholarly research. The time has now come for a similar effort for the Appalachian. The undocumented observations and implicit assumptions of Jack Weller and other advocates of the Appalachian subculture

model should receive serious scrutiny in order that we may judge their validity. Other models explaining conditions in Appalachia should be tested and different strategies for change should be examined. Many of us, if we choose, can be of help in this necessary and worthwhile effort. Let us hope that many make this choice.

NOTES

¹Jack E. Weller, *Yesterday's People: Life in Contemporary Appalachia* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1966).

²By the "Appalachian subculture model," Lewis means the view in which the Southern Appalachians are seen as "a subculture with unique and different customs, values, and style of life which developed historically and is passed on through each succeeding generation." Such a view almost always compares the subculture with the middle-class values of the larger society. See "Fatalism or the Coal Industry?" *Mountain Life and Work* (December 1970), 4. Helen Lewis was among the first to criticize the underlying assumptions of Weller's analysis and to suggest that the processes of colonialism might be of use in understanding developments in Appalachia. I rely heavily on her analysis in this paper. See also Helen Lewis, Sue Kobak, and Linda Johnson, "Family, Religion and Colonialism in Central Appalachia or Bury My Rifle at Big Stone Gap," in *Growin' Up Country*, ed. Jim Axelrod (Clintwood, Va.: Council of the Southern Mountains, 1973), 131-56; and Helen Lewis and Edward Knipe, "The Impact of Coal Mining on the Traditional Mountain Subculture," in *The Not So Solid South*, ed. John Moreland (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1974), 25-37.

³Studies of the Appalachian personality which have accepted many of Weller's basic assumptions and conclusions include Richard A. Ball, "Poverty Case: The Analgesic Subculture of the Southern Appalachians," *American Sociological Review*, 33 (December 1968), 885-95; Frank S. Riddel, "Related Aspects of the Social and Economic Problems, Cultural Tradition, and Educational System of Rural Appalachia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1971); Rena Gazaway, *The Longest Mile* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969); Berton Kaplan, *Blue Ridge: An Appalachian Community in Transition* (Morgantown: Office of Research and Development, Appalachian Center, West Virginia University, 1971); H. Dudley Plunkett and Mary J. Bowman, *Elites and Change in The Kentucky Mountains* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1973); John D. Photiadis, "Rural Southern Appalachia and Mass Society," in *Change in Rural Appalachia*, ed. John Photiadis and Harry Schwarzweller (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 5-22; David H. Loeff, *Appalachia's Children: The Challenge of Mental Health* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1971); and John B. Stephenson, *Shiloh: A Mountain Community* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1968). Stephenson is more discriminating than the others in applying Weller's findings and his book is the best of the Appalachian community studies.

⁴Dwight Billings, "Culture and Poverty in Appalachia: A Theoretical Discussion and Empirical Analysis," *Social Forces*, 53 (December 1974), 315-23.

⁵Thomas Ford, "The Passing of Provincialism," in *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*, ed. Thomas Ford (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1967), 9-34.

⁶Ibid., 32. See the discussion of Ford's findings in Billings, 316-17.

⁷Stephenson, 95.

⁸Weller, 5-7.

⁹Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," *Scientific American*, 215 (October 1966), 19.

¹⁰Edward C. Banfield, *The Unheavenly City Revisited*, rev. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1974); see the discussion in Richard Couto, *Poverty, Politics, and Health Care: An Appalachian Experience* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 10-17.

¹¹To the extent that the two models are similar, the Appalachian subculture model is open to the many criticisms which have been leveled against the culture of poverty model, criticisms which have seriously undermined the validity of the model. Since this paper is concerned with Appalachia, a detailed critique of the culture of poverty model will not be presented. There are several books and articles available which do an excellent job of this. See especially Charles A. Valentine, *Culture and Poverty* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968); William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971); and Jack L. Roach and Orville R. Gursslin, "An Evaluation of the Concept 'Culture of Poverty'," *Social Forces*, 45 (March 1967), 383-92. Several of the more important criticisms of the culture of poverty model will be discussed in this paper in relation to the Appalachian subculture model.

¹²Weller, 151-52. One source of constant confusion in *Yesterday's People* is Weller's failure to differentiate between the concepts of class and culture. Those in the folk class are the people who exhibit the traits of the folk culture. This practice makes it virtually impossible to correlate behavior patterns with variables such as education, residence, income or occupation.

¹³Helen Lewis, "Subcultures of the Southern Appalachians," *Virginia Geographer*, 3 (Spring 1968), 2-8.

¹⁴Bill Best, "From Existence to Essence: A Conceptual Model For An Appalachian Studies Curriculum" (Ed.D. dissertation, Univ. of Massachusetts, 1973), 26-28.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁶Stephenson, 42-136. See also Kaplan, 31-45.

¹⁷Stephenson, 136.

¹⁸Harry Schwarzweiller, James Brown and Joseph Mangalam, *Mountain Families in Transition* (Univ. Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971).

¹⁹Roger Lesser, "Culture: Toward Tomorrow's People," *Peoples' Appalachia*, 1 (March 1970), 6.

²⁰Three studies that do emphasize these traits are Best, 8-63; Loyal Jones, "Appalachian Values," in *Appalachians Speak Up*, comp. I. Best (Berea, Ky.: By the Compiler, 1973), 101-21; and Cratis Williams, "The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction," (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1961), 315-44.

²¹Best, 22-24; see also Jones, 118.

²²Stephenson describes this value as "contentment" (96-99).

²³Ernest H. Austin, Jr., "One View of *Yesterday's People*," *The Appalachian South*, 1 (Spring/Summer 1966), 38.

²⁴*Appalachian Issues and Resources*, comp. Southern Appalachian Ministry in Higher Education (Knoxville: By the Compilers, 1975), 22.

²⁵Helen Lewis, 4-5.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 6. See also the discussion in Couto, 12-17.

²⁷Lewis, Johnson, and Kobak, 148-53.

²⁸Helen Lewis, 6.

²⁹Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," *Social Problems*, 16 (Spring 1969), 393-408. See Helen Lewis, 6-15; and Lewis, Johnson, and Kobak, 134-53.

³⁰Blauner, 395.

³¹Harry Caudill in *Night Comes To The Cumberland*s (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1962) refers to Appalachia as "a colonial appendage of the industrial East and Middle West" (325). Neal Peirce in *The Border South States* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975) refers to Appalachia

as "America's prime economic and political colony of the 20th century" (35). Others describing Appalachia as a colony include William C. Blizzard, "West Virginia Wonderland," *The Appalachian South*, 1 (Spring/Summer 1966), 8-15; Barry Barkan and R. B. Lloyd, "Picking Poverty's Pocket," *Article One* (May 1970); and John Gaventa, "In Appalachia: Property Is Theft," *Southern Exposure*, 1 (Summer-Fall 1973), 43-52. Research that lends support to the colonial analogy includes Rick Diehl, "Appalachia's Energy Elite: A Wing of Imperialism," *Peoples' Appalachia*, 1 (March 1970), 2-3; Rick Diehl, "How the Energy Elite Rules," *Peoples' Appalachia*, 1 (April-May 1970), 7-12; Keith Dix, "The West Virginia Economy: Notes for a Radical Base Study," *Peoples' Appalachia*, 1 (April-May 1970), 3-7; Richard Kirby, "Kentucky Coal: Owners, Taxes, Profits," *Appalachian Lookout*, 1 (October 1969), 19-27; J. Davitt McAteer, *Coal Mine Health and Safety: The Case of West Virginia* (New York: Praeger, 1973); *Coal Government of Appalachia*, comp. Student Task Force for the Appalachian Research and Defense Fund (Charleston, W. Va.: By the Compilers, 1971); and Tom Miller, *Who Owns West Virginia* (Huntington, W. Va.: *The Herald Advertiser* and *The Herald Dispatch*, 1974).

³²Mike Maloney and Ben Huelsman, "Humanism, Scientism and Southern Mountaineers," *Peoples' Appalachia*, 2 (July 1972), 24-27.

³³Ryan, 8.

³⁴For a discussion of problems related to education in Appalachia, see *Appalachian Education For Tomorrow* (Washington, D.C.: ARC, 1971); Jim Branscome, "A Colonial System of Education," *Mountain Life and Work*, 47 (January 1971), 14-18; Stanley Ikenberry, "Educational Reform in Appalachia: Problems of Relevance, Strategy, and Priority," in *Change in Rural Appalachia*, ed. Photiadis and Schwarzweller (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 195-206; and Franklin Parker, "Appalachia: Education in a Depressed Area," *Phi Kappa Phi Journal*, 50 (Fall 1970), 27-38.

³⁵Peter Schrag, "The School and Politics," *Appalachian Review*, 1 (Fall 1966), 6-10.

³⁶Ryan, 16-29.

³⁷Helen Lewis, 5.

³⁸*Ibid.*

Appalachia in Context

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Appalachia in Context

WILMA DYKEMAN

I want to discover Appalachia in a context somewhat more spacious than it usually has enjoyed. For too long the biases and the half-truths of both statistics and popular fiction have made distortions of Appalachia cheaper to credit than to confute, as a contemporary Englishman remarked regarding the exaggerations in Captain John Smith's accounts of his adventures in the Balkans before sailing for Virginia. The perspective gained through a sense of context may serve to enlighten outside observers about neglected aspects of the Appalachian past and present, while encouraging those in the region to feel less "peculiar" and secluded, more self-confident about the future and their role therein.

Let us look at Appalachia in three contexts: that of the South, the larger region of which it has been part, and especially that Old South which has dominated the regional image; that of America, the nation, especially as it burgeoned after the Civil War until the Great Depression of the 1930's; and finally, the larger world of international tensions and challenges.

In each instance Appalachia has provided an alternative: first, to the generally accepted image known as the Solid South; second, to the notion of an ever-progressing, inevitably successful, invariably happy America; and third, to the shadowy threat/opportunity of an emerging Third World "out there," pressing ever more forcibly upon our consciousness and our conscience.

As we join in this venture, I would like to summon the resources mentioned in an essay by historian William R. Taylor: "What the historian ultimately seeks in any age or time," he wrote, "what he means or, in any event, should mean by 'understanding' the past—is its 'feel,' the palpable yet characteristic stamp which sets it off from the life of other times and places. To reach this kind of understanding he must, like other sensitive readers, possess imagination and be willing to use it."¹ Let us be "willing to use our imagination" to rethink how Appalachia has been set apart, and also how it has been akin to "the life of other times and places."

Rupert Vance, in 1932, described the Southern mountains and the lowland South at their extremes:

From Grandfather Mountain to the Father of Waters one travels from the heights of Dixie to the heart of Dixie. In the seven hundred and more miles from the southern highlands to the Mississippi the traveler passes from zenith to nadir. It needs but a customs barrier and a varying language to mark the limit of two cultures....

The contrasts are startling. From an all staple cash economy to the self-contained

domestic economy of the true frontier farm, from supervised tenant labor in a pseudofeudal organization to an area of freeholds of patriarchal families, from overwhelming ratios of Negroes to no Negroes at all, from population density to isolation, comprise some of the transitions from Delta to Highlands. River towns and mountain courthouses, rich soil and poor soil, Negro Dialect and Elizabethan English, level flood plains and rugged mountains, river transportation and horseback trails epitomize these differences. The Delta followed the sectionalism of Calhoun and Davis, the Highlands knew no politics more recent than Washington and fought for the Union or not at all. [Did Professor Vance forget that there was a President named Jackson who was remembered by a number of mountain people for several generations?] The significance of this mountainous zone, among the highest inhabited areas in the United States, is obscured by the fact that it is divided among eight different commonwealths. Were this area thrown into one it would doubtless constitute America's one unique commonwealth.²

Isolation and the handicap of not coalescing into a single entity are generally attributed to geography. Mountain ranges and lonely valleys certainly posed barriers to easy settlement and communication. They have influenced every aspect of Appalachia's economic and cultural life. But the significance of Appalachia may have been obscured through many decades by more than lack of post offices and roads. There was also the surrounding reality of a South with a different agricultural base (slavery), a separate and exploited race (of blacks), and a powerful mystique (magnolias, mint juleps, chivalry).

Constance Morley sensed this situation when she wrote in 1913 that Appalachian people, after the frontier period, were "imprisoned in their mountain fastnesses because of lack of means of communication, in part the result of obstacles presented by the slave states that surrounded them like an unnavigable sea; by lack of communication and by conditions of life in the lowlands where the black man was king as well as slave."³

Miss Morley's reference to the slave as king may be puzzling, but quite clear is her suggestion that "the peculiar institution" presented obstacles to the non-slaveholding mountain citizens no less formidable than the pinacles of the Unakas and the Cumberlands.

It is well known that there were few slaveholders in Appalachia. Small farms made the single-crop agriculture of the cotton kingdom impossible. An attitude more pragmatic than pious, one probably prevalent in the region, was recorded by Frederick Law Olmsted during his Southern travels in 1854. In July, in the mountains of North Carolina, he spent the night with a farmer-storekeeper who agreed with Olmsted's observation that "there were but few slaves in this part of the country." The man "wished that there were fewer...that they could all be sent out of the country—sent to Liberia"; he had visited the deeper South counties and concluded that slavery worked ill on white people, made the owners "passionate and proud, and ugly, and it made the poor people mean....There's hardly any one that don't think slavery's a curse to our

country, or who wouldn't be glad to get rid of it."⁴

Despite this disparity, the Appalachian South and the Deep South still felt a minimum sense of cleavage before the Civil War. As several historians have pointed out, the frontier nature of the region still united its various parts into a more or less homogeneous entity; there was no "Appalachia" in the antebellum consciousness.

But the fact of secession and eruption of war forced a reappraisal of loyalties, sectional and national. Strong federal loyalties were part of the tradition of the Old Southwest, at the heart of Appalachia. It was from this back country that Andy Jackson emerged to counter Calhoun's nullification doctrine with his famous toast, "Our Federal Union—it must be preserved!" As the Confederate government reached out across its member states, inequitable conscription laws gave rise to the accusation of a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight." Mindful of its past, resentful of its present, it was not surprising that Appalachia would send thousands of its men to fight in the Union cause. On June 17, 1861, the bulk of Virginia's Appalachian counties issued a Declaration of Independence from the Old Dominion and seceded to form the new state of West Virginia. The valley of East Tennessee provided not only soldiers but badly needed food supplies for the Federal armies.

Ironically, however, these contributions to the winning cause cost Appalachia dearly, especially during the years after the war. Appalachia's general defection from the Confederacy removed it from the Southern mystique and many of the political maneuvers that would make it possible for the South to win in state legislatures and Washington the victory that had been lost at Appomattox.

Appalachian Unionists belied the solid front that was essential to such victory. To geographic isolation—perhaps never as ubiquitous as has been assumed—there was now added a social and political isolation born of indifference in some instances, bred of deliberate, cynical manipulations in other instances.

Appalachia was deprived of part of its history. *The South*, in history books and popular memoirs and romantic novels, was one large cotton plantation inhabited by paternalistic, aristocratic whites (fabulously wealthy before the War, genteelly impoverished after the War) and laboring blacks (meek Uncle Toms or raging Nat Turners), all part of a drama glamorous because of its trappings of wealth and exotic sexual overtones, intriguing because of its sporadic confessionals of guilt and sin, concerns which seemed more and more crowded out by frantic commercialism and mundane trade at the national level. The South became the nation's romance and catharsis. The incredible popularity of *Gone With the Wind* at once revealed and reenforced the continuing grip that the

image of the Old South exerted on the popular imagination—nationally as well as regionally.

That image made no allowance for the dissenting experience of Appalachia. In fact, an aura of inferiority came to surround any suggestion of such dissent. The aristocrats had been Confederates—so the thought was transmitted—and any defection came from the ignorant poor or the socially deprived.

Perpetuation of this stereotype was due to more than perversity or whimsy, however. It had purpose and result. Disfranchisement of large segments of the population became the chief weapon by which the bourbon rule of the Old South could reassert domination of the politics and economy of the New South. In this purpose, the black voter was not, as is commonly supposed, the sole threat or victim. As historian C. Vann Woodward has pointed out, "The real question was *which whites* should be supreme."⁵

When the various Southern states held their disfranchising conventions, "views were often stated with revealing frankness." In Virginia a Tidewater county delegate told his convention that "it was 'not the negro vote which works the harm,' but 'the deprived and incompetent men of our own race.'"⁶ Tests of literacy and property qualifications became the most common "barriers erected against voters of the lower class." Woodward records that "in the western and mountain districts of Virginia and North Carolina suspicion and resentment flamed up fiercely against property and literacy tests."

Those flames illuminated no insights among a general public which found it tidy and uncomplicated to believe that the struggle for democracy in the South was between whites on one side and blacks on the other. They missed the irony pointed out by Woodward "that in 1877 leaders of the Southern whites pledged themselves to protect Negro suffrage, and that, after Reconstruction, the Democrats of the Black Belt counties, who were the most rock-ribbed Democrats of all, not only countenanced a continuation of Negro voting, but even controlled a captive Negro vote and employed it flagrantly to defeat the white voters of the hill counties, who were more numerous than those in the Black Belt."⁷

During the state election in Mississippi in 1896, after passage of the poll tax, it was asserted that that device had discouraged "probably 6,000 negroes who would have been qualified...but it discouraged 60,000 or more white men from voting." Many of these were people of the hill counties.

A result of such disfranchisement and general scorn is touched upon by Cratis Williams in his extensive dissertation when he speaks of "a land

with impassable roads, few schools, political neglect from the state capitols (for the mountain people are Republican minorities in Democratic states)" where "hundreds of thousands of mountain people were wasted as human resources for decades." It is necessary to underscore those words "political neglect from the state capitols," for this was one reason behind those impassable roads and non-existent schools and general "falling away from culture." And the neglect, the waste of those human resources arose to an important extent from the need to keep white hill-country voters from becoming a potent force; it was urgent to see them as backward, ignorant, and inadequate—as individuals and as citizens. Thus, the journalists, fictioneers, and travel writers wittingly and unwittingly accepted the Deep South's own attitude toward its mountain cousins, and their renditions strengthened the political and economic bondage of the highlanders.

Thus it became possible for a man of broad learning and essential gentility, a man such as William Alexander Percy, son of the Mississippi Delta, to write of the hill people he knew at the turn of the century: "Farther and farther west they were pushed by an unequal competition until they lodged in the mountains of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky and in the clay hills of Alabama and Mississippi. Pure English stock. If it was ever good, the virus of poverty, malnutrition, and interbreeding has done its degenerative work: the present breed is probably the most unprepossessing on the broad face of the ill-populated earth. I know they are responsible for the only American ballads, for camp meetings, for a whole new and excellent school of Southern literature. I can forgive them as the Lord God forgives, but admire them, trust them, love them—never."⁸

Such Southerners shunned the frankness of old John Randolph of Roanoke who had once barked, "I am an aristocrat. I love liberty. I hate equality." But the message persisted. It was communicated at many levels in many ways, overtly, covertly. Sometimes it took the form of sardonic and witty summary of the history of Appalachia, as in this passage by Virginian Marshall W. Fishwick:

Things came hard in the hills. Crops didn't do well on sides of hills, especially when the rain started washing away the topsoil. The only plows were forked saplings with one iron-covered prong. This ground was tough to break. The horse, if there was one, had a grapevine or a rawhide harness. If there wasn't any horse, the old woman or one of the boys would have to pull. If the corn wasn't in the ground when the oak leaves were the size of squirrel's ears, somebody was likely to go hungry....

Calendars were all right, but upcountry the four seasons were plantin' time, hoein' time, fodder-pullin', and cold. In between they could set around, sing love songs and hymns, and think about heaven. Heaven was the place where grandpa expected to have spareribs every meal.

What did best on the Virginia frontier was not the crops or the animals, but the men.

They raised them tough all the way through. Their ma's started them out with mountain dew, and kept on till they had milk teeth. Then they might move to cracklin' bread and squirrel stew, with maybe a little barbecued shoat for good measure. Pretty soon the young'n would be bellowing for persimmon beer, honey in the honeycomb, and dewberries picked in springtime. First thing you knew, you'd have a mountain man on your hands.⁹

Later on, discussing Buchanan County "at the western edge of Virginia," the writer deploras his own approach, apparently unaware of any ambivalence: "Poor whites hover in the background of Virginia life and fiction like sinister shadows, which will not go away. They are made the butt of crude and sardonic humor, reflecting the authors' inability to shut the door on a room which everyone wishes were not in the house. The blood of these people, as well as the Negroes, is on the white aristocratic hands....The state's failure lies not so much in things done as things undone."¹⁰

Thus firmly entrenched was the idea of doing *to* and *for* Appalachia. Such condescension had not always been the standard response to this place and people. A European journalist, Moritz Busch, traveling through mid-America in 1851-52, wrote with considerable eloquence of "A Visit to the Backwoodsmen of East Kentucky," where he found what he believed to be the essence of the American spirit:

If one now asks...where the writer believes that he can see the heart of which he has spoken, the answer is, first of all, not in the "deep" South, where the black two-legged domestic animals produce the material for our Age of Cotton and where their masters cultivate only the ignoble passions of chivalry. Rather, the heart—and with it the feeling, the Romanticism, and the poetry of the American people—lies under the ribs, which proceed from the vertebral column of the Alleghenies, to the left of the great aorta of the Ohio; and one chamber of the heart is called Virginia, and the other, Kentucky. We do not mean merely that Virginia and Kentucky which the map shows us outlined in green or red, but the heart of which we speak extends as far as specifically Virginian and Kentuckian character have spread. Thus also a good part of Tennessee, of North Carolina, and especially, however, of southern Ohio and western Pennsylvania can be included, although the two first-mentioned states must always be regarded as the center.¹¹

Even at this early date, the German visitor could detect the enervating influence of "false civilization" which was "disguised as merchants and preachers." He kept his eye on the mountaineers. "Here honor re-creates the days which are no more. Here still prevails the hospitality of a time when there were no hotels. Here the pride of true freedom still holds up its head, unspoiled by loafersdom and vote-buying. Here almost every person is still a 'character,' whether in a good or bad sense. Here genuineness of feeling still exists. Here folksongs are still heard."¹² At the end of his journey, trying to determine "the chief aspiration of the nation," Busch decided that America was pushing its way "toward democracy, the government of all, by all, for all."¹³

"Of all, by all, for all" would have to pass a bloody test before America

was sure of that aspiration, however, and even then the machinations of special groups would keep the dream from being realized for generations to come.

The Civil War not only divided America. It divided Appalachia from the South. But since Appalachia's geographic location was still Southern, it was judged, rejected, isolated by the very region of which it was, in one sense, both warm heart and gritty gizzard.

Yet the isolation of the mountains must not be over-emphasized. For Appalachia must be examined in the context of its nation as well as its region. Here contradiction and paradox reduce Appalachian stereotypes to an absurdity and goad us to closer examination of the past in our search for present understanding.

Consider, for instance, Appalachia in relation to that South and nation described at mid-century by social historian Max Lerner in his massive volume, *America as a Civilization*: "The 'new South' that Henry Grady evoked in the 1880's, and which has been three quarters of a century in coming, is still turned toward the past, with a nostalgia for its lost glamour and glory, a hatred of the Northern absentee owners whom it identifies with the conquering enemy, and a sense of guilt about slavery which is interwoven with a fear of the encircling Negro population. The South is the only region in America tied together not by its common consciousness of present growth and future potentials but by its past, not by what it can achieve or build but by what it cherishes and fears."¹⁴

A major portion of Appalachia did not identify with that South nostalgic for "lost glamour and glory," and neither did it discover its identity in an American "common consciousness of present growth and future potentials." As it was not part of the plantation myth of the 19th century, so it was not a participant in the progress myth of the 20th century. This left it in a kind of limbo both precarious and precious: economically vulnerable but free to keep or create its own myths. That freedom it often foreswore.

One paradox of the limbo in which Appalachia was suspended involved the question of its isolation. If Appalachia at the turn of the century was isolated as far as roads and schools and hospitals and means of cultural inspiration were concerned, it was becoming far from isolated in the matter of sawmills and railroads to the logging enterprises, mines and the company towns that burgeoned in their wake.

America was on the move; industrial tycoons amassed fortunes in railroads, coal, steel, timber, oil, banking, and other vast enterprises, often with government help and favors. A turbulent spirit of competitive optimism was reenforced by the law of the marketplace which frequently seemed to be merely the law of the jungle, red in tooth and claw. And Ap-

palachia was not isolated from that marketplace, that jungle.

An example of Appalachia's involvement on the national industrial scene occurred in the mountains of East Tennessee in 1891 when coal miners found their already low wages threatened even further by use of convict labor. The Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company had leased the Tennessee penitentiary—some 1,300 convicts—which assured the company of a steady labor supply to withstand any threatened strikes for improved wages or working conditions:

In 1891, the miners of Briceville, Anderson County, were presented by the Tennessee Coal Mine Company with an "iron-clad" contract relinquishing employees' right to a check weigher, agreeing to "scrip" pay, and pledging no strikes. When they turned down the contract, the company ordered convicts to tear down their houses and build stockades for the convicts who were to replace free labor. The evicted miners then marched in force on the stockades and, without bloodshed, compelled guards, officers, and convicts to board a train for Knoxville....Only after the Governor had promised to call a special session of the legislature were the miners pacified....the special session of the legislature took no satisfactory action. After a futile appeal to the courts, the miners took the law into their own hands. On the night of October 31, 1891, they forcibly freed the convicts of the Tennessee Coal Mine Company, allowed them all to escape, and burned down the stockades. They repeated the same tactics later at two other mining companies, releasing in all some five hundred convicts. The mine operators of the area then employed free labor, gave up the "iron-clad" contract, and granted a check weigher.¹⁵

This was an Appalachia not isolated but very much involved in a hustling, ruthless, commercial growth.

America was not only shoveling coal during these decades. It was helping fashion a New South. And one feature of that New South was the cotton mill. It was largely sustained by the labor of women and children, many of them from mountain counties. Appalachian "hillbillies" mingled with poor whites of the lowlands to form clusters of mill villages in their mutual search for a better existence. The search was grueling. In 1900, 57.5 per cent of the children working in Southern cotton mills were between the ages of 10 and 13.

As the industry encouraged such emigration and as it justified the harsh labor conditions required in an intensely competitive enterprise, it sometimes found it necessary to call to public attention the medieval environment from which benevolent progress rescued these fortunate laborers. One of the more curious documents ever spawned in Appalachia was just such a book, *The Child That Toileth Not*, published in 1912. The author, Thomas Robinson Dawley, Jr., had made an expedition through one corner of Appalachia and several Piedmont mill towns and he sought to prove to the U.S. Bureau of Labor that "the condition of the poor children who do get jobs in the cotton-mills of the South are [*sic*] improved thereby." Thus, in the manufacturing villages he found alert, hopeful children carrying forth "light work," improved in health and

education above their counterparts who had remained in the hills surrounded by "sloth, ignorance and vice."

His collection of photographs depicted a gloomy Appalachia. "Not Only Lawless But Lazy" read the caption under the picture of one mountain family; "He [the father] declared that they would not work, no matter how good a job was offered them." (Such were the indigent who refused to leave their mountain homes for the mills.) Other photographs wed description to judgment: "No Hope For These—Where they toil not, neither do they spin" or "A Decadent Family."

The author took to heart the report of an innkeeper who knew conditions in Appalachia: " 'Anyone who ever seen them chil'ren in the mountain as I hev seen 'em, wouldn't say nuthin' 'bout them workin' in the cotton-mills. I tell yer Mister, I hev seen them poor things livin' on berries in the summer time like bears, an' in the winter they got nothin' but corn-meal, an' how they keep from freezin' ter death in them cabins o' theirs is a mystery. Cotton-mills, Mister! Why, thar ain't enough cotton-mills to take care o' them poor chil'ren what's in our mountains. If thar only war, an' they could get them chil'ren to 'em, it would be the greates' thing in the world fer 'em.' " ¹⁶

Those who had deserted the opportunities of the mills to return to their Appalachian homes were perceived as the most wretched of the mountain folks. "I was informed," Mr. Dawley says,

by another man engaged in growing ginseng...that at a small settlement called Medlin, transportation had been furnished for nearly the entire population which went off to the cotton-mills in Georgia. But it was not long before they were back again. Asked why they had returned my informant smiled as he said,

"The work was too steady for them."

I learned that many of these people had large families, that they were usually small in stature and degenerate; that they raised a little corn, and their other supplies were obtained chiefly by digging medicinal roots which they traded at the local stores for such things as they most required, such as a few yards of calico, snuff and tobacco. ¹⁷

To the benighted reformers who were afflicting the South and the nation with their cries for child labor laws, this missionary for the mills presented his concern for the "small in stature" snuff-dippers who needed economic redemption:

My thoughts constantly reverted to those poor people in the mountains whose only chance for betterment are [*sic*] the opportunities opened up to them by the manufacturing industries that may give them employment. I seemed to hear the cries of their children from their dismal abodes. My thoughts reverted to their half starved bodies and miserable diet of crude corn meal and fat pork, and I could see their begrimed faces and partially clothed bodies draped in filthy rags. I could recall the pleadings of those who had tasted of the benefits accrued from light employment in a cotton-mill, pleading to be allowed to return to the mill from which they had been legislated by the preachings of those well-meaning reformers. ¹⁸

Industrialization uninhibited by any human welfare legislation was in-

creasingly presented as the national and regional salvation. Although children eight and nine years old were working eleven and twelve hours a day, one Georgia leader could assert that "the most beautiful sight that we see is the child at labor; as early as he may get at labor the more beautiful, the more useful does his life get to be."

There were skeptics. One young North Carolina minister and editor wryly observed that the mill as depicted by its apostles was "an orphan asylum, a children's training school, a playground, a hospital, a college and a trip to Europe, all in one." Surely the mountain family who could resist such opportunity was backward! One explanation of this "backwardness" was isolation. Used without qualification, the term robbed Appalachian people of any choice or free will; they became solely victims of geography. Perhaps it was difficult for a "nation of joiners" to comprehend or admit that some of its people could willingly follow "the path less traveled by."

What we are suggesting here is simply that Appalachia's isolation needs to be considered in broad national context, both for what it reveals about mountain people and about Americans as a whole. Other aspects of Appalachia merit similar attention. To present one more example: the region's reputation for lawlessness.

Appalachian lawlessness became a thematic stock-in-trade of both local color novelists and social reformers from the late nineteenth century on till the present. It was statistically sound, artistically titillating, commercially popular, a source equally rich for humor or lamentation. Yet America's snickers and censure were not without their ironies.

While robber barons were fleecing the people of public lands and treasured resources, while big city bosses and rural demagogues were subverting the essential democratic processes, while chain-gang labor enriched certain treasuries and lynching of blacks violated every sanction of law and order, national readers were invited to believe that moonshine stills and family feuds made Appalachia a unique example of lawlessness. Actually, violence was as American as apple pie—whether it was exemplified by a "splendid little war" in the Philippines, by John Dillinger, or by the Hatfields and McCoys. The variance in social acceptability seemed to be determined in part by the economic status of the participants and by the public enormity of the violence. The antics of a distiller of corn whiskey in an Appalachian laurel thicket, robbing the federal government of alcoholic beverage revenue, offered much more entertainment than the dry stratagems of a financier coolly juggling accounts and figures to rob thousands of trusting investors of their hard-earned savings. If the two were equally "lawless," that verdict rarely seeped into the public consciousness.

Seen, then, in the context of some of America's exploitations and deviations as they developed in the years following the Civil War and accelerated during the decades before and after the turn of the century, Appalachia does not appear to be totally isolated or uniquely lawless. Those who came to the region usually found what they were looking for, whether it was a rare ballad or plant, rich mineral or forest resources, reason for hope or despair. But whatever they found they could seize and use to their own purposes with apparent impunity; this was a kind of off-limits preserve not traditionally Southern, not progressively American. In many ways Appalachia was a paradox: in and yet not of both the region and the nation surrounding it.

Even the experience of the Great Depression could be considered different, less devastating, in Appalachia than elsewhere in the South and America. So perceptive an observer as Virginius Dabney could write in his 1971 history of Virginia that during the 1930's small marginal farmers and mountaineers in the southwest part of his state were suffering less than "some other elements" because they "had so little to begin with" and "could usually eke out some kind of existence." Apparently hunger was good training for starvation. Physical or mental anguish was more real if you lost a Tidewater mansion rather than a cabin up the hollow, if no market for your crop left you with less money than was customary rather than no money at all.

Eventually the Appalachian person became stigmatized by the situation of which he was the very victim. As Mr. Dabney brought his mountaineers forward to the present, he deplored "the remoteness of so many Appalachian dwellers from the outside world. Immured in their coves and hollows, with nothing remotely describable as roads to link them with the population centers, they sit on their sagging cabin porches with their squirrel rifles, content to follow their ancient ways."¹⁹

A glimmer of hope filtered in from the industrial parks and development commissions which the author felt gave evidence of "the up-and-coming spirit in that part of Virginia."

Around the globe there are Third World nations caught in ambivalent roles and allegiances familiar to much of Appalachia. Many of them might be summarized by Mr. Dabney's two phrases: "ancient ways" and "the up-and-coming spirit."

In a world which has suffered environmental degradation and moral degradation as partial consequence of up-and-coming commercial struggle, it should come as no shock to learn that there are some people and countries today who may prefer to proceed into the era of the atomic bomb with some sense of choice and discrimination in their growth, their "progress," their prosperity. Many of them share with Appalachia the

problems of being a "poverty pocket" in an affluent world. They also share the irony that this is true not because they are essentially poor but because they are rich—rich in natural resources which were/are siphoned off to increase coffers of wealth elsewhere.

From the earliest days of exploration, when speculators saw the vast wilderness of Appalachia as a source of incredible personal profits and power and formed land companies to secure the benefits of hundreds of thousands of acres gathered into a single holding, until the present day of developers who envision uses of nature's bounty and human resources in Appalachia to garner personal or corporate fortunes, Appalachia has shared with many countries of the world a colonial experience.

It has also shared the demoralization which results from attitudes equating poverty with immorality or with picturesqueness. Such attitudes may be used to justify outside indifference to poverty, or they may serve as an excuse to maintain the status quo. In any event, there is some irony in the fact that a region considered backward or provincial in the American context may come closer than any other to being universal in today's world context.

In their history, *The Rise of American Civilization*, Charles and Mary Beard noted an important exception to the "American way" as it was developing during the so-called "gilded age." They wrote:

Except in some of the mountain regions of the South, the aspirations of the middle class were on the whole joyously emulated by the agricultural masses and by the merchants of tiny villages who thrived upon local trade. Though constituting, even at the end of the nineteenth century, a majority of the population, farmers and small-town folk, with respect to the tendencies of their cultural life, were drawn into the urban vortex. Handicraft arts which once gave distinction to European peasants and small-town artisans had never flourished to the same extent in the United States and with the advance of machinery those that had been introduced in earlier times practically disappeared.²⁰

Those distinctive handicraft arts disappearing elsewhere survived in Appalachia. So did many of the needs and values of which they were the outward manifestation. Missionaries of church and school coming into the region sometimes noted that certain handmade articles were akin to similar articles in other countries of the world. Thus Frances Louisa Goodrich observed in the mountains of Western North Carolina the "melon" basket whose shape was also familiar in Ireland, Jamaica, and throughout central and southern Europe. Such "very ancient" ideas form links across many boundaries.

Such links may also be forged by common needs and dilemmas, and outsiders' misunderstandings of those dilemmas. Jesse Stuart, the Kentucky poet and novelist, relates that on U.S. State Department trips to many countries around the world he could establish rapport with the people in those countries because he had known poverty first-hand. Such a

fact surprised many of his listeners who nursed the stereotype of the rich and ugly American. Description of his childhood home, his hard work on the land, his effort to achieve an education, to teach and to write, won him friends among those who were confronting the same hurdles in their "underdeveloped" countries in a later generation. The Appalachian experience of being poor in money, rural, exploited, and patronized is less part of the American experience than it is that of many "foreign" countries.

In this 1969 description of one of Kentucky's hollows by a nurse-anthropologist-sociologist, we hear echoes of some reports issuing from "backward" countries around the globe:

One important truth emerges: Duddie's Branch was and still is an unplanned neighborhood. According to present-day standards, the twentieth-century primitives who inhabit it live in a 3-D world: darkness, destitution, and deprivation....What appears to the outsider as irrational conduct and behavior becomes intelligible only when viewed from within because the values peculiar to those in poverty cannot be explained or interpreted apart from their culture.²¹

Is this abnormal? Did not F. Scott Fitzgerald once ask Ernest Hemingway if the very rich were not different? The author offers two especially noteworthy observations about these Appalachian people:

They feel that their homes and small pieces of land belong to them in a way that removes any need to participate in the outer world's senseless tension-laden pace. Their world belongs to them in the way that nothing else in society does or can.²²

Hollow folks value personal face-to-face relationships, especially the children. If I had as many arms as a centipede has legs, I would still not have enough to hold hands with all the children who want to walk with their hands in mine. We really do not know what kind of approach would make a difference in their lives.²³

There is no hint that materially destitute as they are, these people possess something of value, something universal in their abiding sense of place and their ability to relate personally, warmly, to others. As ways are devised to transform this into a "planned neighborhood," may we not also hope that its dwellers will be left unburdened by those tensions and fears that make it necessary for more advantaged Americans to join encounter groups so that they can relearn how to touch each other, how to respond to a human instinct that is naturally and spontaneously fulfilled among these underprivileged children?

These are slippery areas for discussion and dogma. They defy neat documentation and the substantiation of statistics. Yet they suggest fresh perspectives which are necessary to the understanding that can make Appalachia's past significant and its future abundant in all those ways that distinguish values from prosperity alone.

A final glance at Appalachia in the context of the New South, a powerful America, and an awakening world of human hope and aspiration is summarized in the words of an Appalachian statesman speaking more than

sixty years ago. W. D. Weatherford was summoning fellow Southerners attending a Sociological Congress to a new vision of the black person: "Economic and intellectual improvement do not make a people great," he said, remarking on changes he had seen come to the South:

They are a background and basis of greatness, but they are not the essence of greatness....The test of an individual or a nation is not in the realm of possession nor in the realm of knowledge, but in the realm of relationships. It is not what we have or what we know that makes us great, but our attitude toward humanity....The final test of every individual and of every nation is in its attitude toward persons, any persons, all persons....

Immanuel Kant, in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, lays down this maxim: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as a means."²⁴

Relationships. The crucial test for our nervous, fragmented, lethally armed world. Avoiding the twin hazards of chauvinistic boosterism and impatient despair, we can approach Appalachia with the judgment recently expressed by a cultural historian: "The greatest self-confidence and loyalty are inspired in those who see what they do locally in universal terms."²⁵

Appalachia may have a contribution to make as our nation and world reaffirm relationships, rediscovering our common humanity, struggling toward survival.

NOTES

¹Marcus Cunliffe and Robin W. Winks, *Pastmasters: Some Essays on American Historians* (New York, 1969).

²Rupert Vance, *Human Geography of the South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1935), 240-41.

³Constance Morley, *The Carolina Mountains* (Boston, 1913), 149.

⁴Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom* (New York, 1953), 399.

⁵C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1951), 329.

⁶*Ibid.*, 330.

⁷David M. Potter on C. Vann Woodward in *Pastmasters*, 382.

⁸William Alexander Percy, *Lanterns on the Levee* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), 19-20.

⁹Marshall W. Fishwick, *Virginia: A New Look at the Old Dominion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 102.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 216-17.

¹¹Moritz Busch, *Travels Between the Hudson and the Mississippi, 1851-1852*, trans. Norman H. Binger (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1971), 151.

¹²*Ibid.*, 153.

¹³*Ibid.*, 273.

¹⁴Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957), 192.

¹⁵Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 233-34.

¹⁶Thomas Robinson Dawley, Jr., *The Child That Toileth Not* (New York: Gracie Pub. Co.,

1912), 274.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., ix.

¹⁹Virginus Dabney, *Virginia: The New Dominion* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1971), 571.

²⁰Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (New York, 1927), II, 401-2.

²¹Rena Gazaway, *The Longest Mile* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969), 41.

²²Ibid., 42.

²³Ibid., 343.

²⁴W. D. Weatherford, in *The Call of the New South, Addresses at the Southern Sociological Congress* (Nashville, 1912), 221-22.

²⁵Raymond D. Gastil, *Cultural Regions of the United States* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1975), 45.

Appalachia and the Idea of America: The Problem of the Persisting Frontier

HENRY D. SHAPIRO

Since the 1870's, Americans have regarded Appalachia as a strange land inhabited by a peculiar people. Defined by its culture as well as by geography, Appalachia has seemed an anomaly in an otherwise unified and homogeneous nation, a discrete region, in but not of America. As such it has generally been ignored, or at most viewed as a quaint and interesting land where moonshiners and feudists live in log cabins and speak the stately language of Elizabethan England, while their wives spin and weave and sing traditional ballads of kings and queens and ravens sitting on fences. From time to time, however, the existence of Appalachia has been brought more or less forcibly to the attention of Americans living outside the region. At such times the peculiarities of mountain life, in whatever terms they are defined at the particular moment, have become troublesome facts requiring explanation, and Americans have been forced to consider the possible implications of Appalachia's existence for their own understanding of the nature of American civilization.

Our own is such a time, of course. In the context of our recent discovery of poverty in the United States, Appalachia has come to epitomize that "other America" of which Michael Harrington wrote, the antithesis of an America defined by economic growth and technological achievement. As a symbol of the existence of pockets of poverty in an affluent society, Appalachia has in fact had a clear advantage over more ephemeral examples of the same phenomenon—those populations which we designate in statistical rather than human terms as "the poor" and to which we thereby deny any existence except that in the minds of demographers. Appalachia is physically real as well as statistically real. It has location and a history—and a history of poverty. Its poverty too has a history and, like Appalachia, can not be expected to disappear with increasing national prosperity.

In the last decade, as a consequence, we have rediscovered Appalachia, and have been faced once again with the need to explain the persistent discrepancy between life in the Southern mountain region and life in the rest of the United States. Such explanation has been easy, however. Having defined Appalachia as a land characterized by permanent poverty, we may

regard the disparity between Appalachia and America as a difference of degree, not of kind. In Appalachia there is less money, less opportunity for the accumulation of money, and consequently less of what money can provide, to individuals and to the community, than is normal in the rest of the nation. Seen in these terms, Appalachian culture becomes the culture of a depressed area and hence a temporary phenomenon, however permanent the conditions which create it may be. We are thus obliged to deal only with the historical causes of Appalachia's poverty, and with the anomaly of pockets of poverty in an affluent society. Because we have so severely restricted our vision of the relationship of Appalachia and America, in other words, we need not face the kind of situation which might challenge our conception of America as a land of opportunity, where economic growth is natural, or of American civilization as unified and homogeneous.¹

America's relationship with Appalachia has not always been so simple, however. From the late nineteenth century, when the mountainous portions of eight Southern states were first recognized as composing a discrete region, at least through the 1920's, the existence of this strange land and peculiar people raised questions about the nature of American civilization itself. Discovered in the 1870's by local color writers who used it as a neutral ground against which to set their stories of upper-class romance and lower-class passion, by the end of the century Appalachia had come to seem a stubborn outpost of that quintessentially American way of life which industrialism and urbanism were destroying. Indeed, Appalachia was unique among the "little corners" of the nation which came to the public's attention via the local color movement, in that its peculiarities, although identified as characteristic of the American past, were observed in the American present. The tendency to glorify America's past, which has been the typical accompaniment of our most assiduous efforts to abandon that past, gave the peculiarities of Appalachian life a rather special meaning and value during the last years of the century, to the degree that these were identified with the culture and customs of earlier days. From this point of view, the transformation of Appalachia by the forces of modernization and homogenization could only be regarded with ambiguity or downright despair, while the persistence of pioneer virtues among the isolated mountaineers made them seem a rebuke to an effete generation and a possible leaven for the nation.²

It was the absence of modern economic institutions and modern social patterns which had first attracted the local color writers to Appalachia—physically for purposes of rustication at the resort areas of the New South and imaginatively as a field to be mined for literary material.³ Between 1870 and 1890, at the very beginning of the literary exploitation

of the region, at least one hundred twenty-five short stories and more than ninety sketches dealing with the nature of mountain life were published.⁴ As one of the areas of the nation "least affected by the progress of a growing national unity"⁵ and yet within close proximity to the very centers of the nationalizing process, Appalachia seemed inherently interesting, even while its topography and natural history, and the peculiar folkways of its inhabitants, made it seem romantic and picturesque.

The dominance of the literary imagination in this first discovery of Appalachia was of great significance. Not only did it establish as conventional an essentially literary vision of the Southern mountain region as a strange land inhabited by a peculiar people, over the view of those who saw in the mountains only unlimited possibilities for economic development,⁶ but it made literary criteria primary in analyses of mountain life and of the relationship of Appalachia and America. Even such non-literary types as Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, the Kentucky-born Harvard geologist, and George E. Vincent, a University of Chicago sociologist, directed their efforts more at achieving an elegance of style than at careful and complete discussion of mountain conditions. Among the literary folk, on the other hand, Charles Dudley Warner, from the security of an established literary reputation and with an image as Connecticut sophisticate to maintain, was virtually alone in daring to admit that mountain poverty was as dull and unpleasant as any other kind of poverty, from the point of view of participants and observers both.⁷ In the literature of Appalachia, as a consequence, metaphor characteristically did the work of exposition. Because it was more interesting, the "as if" was preferred to the "is," and came eventually to be identified as reality.

It was this tendency which may be said to have given America's image of Appalachia its particular form. Those first on the scene noted with some surprise that the mountaineers lived under the rude conditions of a pioneer generation. Those next on the scene sought to turn a literary trick, and in emphasizing the picturesque qualities of life in the region suggested that a journey there was like a journey into America's past—"you detach yourself from all that you have experienced, and take up the history of English speaking men and women at the point it had reached a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago."⁸ It was an easy next step to the identification of the Appalachian present with the American past as a matter of fact, not merely of metaphor. By the end of the century, the literature on Appalachia asked with all seriousness how this enclave of pioneer culture had been preserved against the ravages of time and of progress, and how most effectively to assist the mountaineers in leaping a hundred years from their present to the present of the rest of the nation. The mountaineers had become "our pioneer ancestors."⁹

It is at this point that one may speak of the emergence of a tension between Appalachia and America. Appalachia had come to represent America's past, a past of heroism and self-sacrifice, hard work and commitment, by which independence had been won and preserved, the Union defended, a continent subdued. It was a past in which giants walked the earth, with ax and Bible in hand. It was in any case America's own past, and hence not to be discredited lightly. From the late 1880's on, as a consequence, one may see a persistent ambiguity toward the peculiarities of mountain life in the literature on Appalachia. To the degree that these were conceived as the undesirable consequences of poverty and isolation, they were regarded with contempt, or with that "sympathetic understanding" which precedes remedial action. To the degree that they were conceived as survivals of an earlier pattern of culture, however, they were respected as different but acceptable, or even held up for emulation by a modern generation out of touch with its past and hence with the essential national temper. Ambiguity towards the peculiarities of Appalachian life involved more than America's response to the existence of this particular region, however. Ultimately it precipitated a confrontation with the fact of social and geographic diversity in the present.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Appalachia's strangeness to those Americans who discovered the region at the end of the nineteenth century was the apparent absence in mountain culture of conceptions of law and order, and of "correct" notions of the relationship of the individual and society, as manifested by the apparent prevalence of feuding and the manufacture of blockade or "moonshine" whiskey. The disregard for duly constituted authority which these phenomena implied was an overt indication of the disparity between mountain life and the more normal life of the rest of America. "A shock falls across the...mind to realize that such a community of lawlessness should exist in a country that calls itself civilized," one commentator noted after reading John Fox, Jr.'s fictional reconstruction of "A Cumberland Vendetta."¹⁰ More important, the occurrence of feuding and moonshining helped crystallize a growing sense, based originally on the impressionistic accounts of travellers and short-story writers, that Appalachia was indeed a discrete region, in but not of America.

Conflicts between mountaineers and revenue officers over enforcement of the excise tax on whiskey were reported in the periodical press as early as 1867. It was in the next two decades, however, as the more general interest in Appalachia developed, that real attention was paid to moonshining as one of the peculiarities of mountain life.¹¹ At issue was not so much the illegality of unlicensed distilleries, however, but the quaintness of this aspect of domestic economy as it persisted in the mountains. By the

1890's, moonshining had become so integral an element in the popular conception of Appalachia that discussion of the phenomenon, often coupled with a defense of such illegal activities on historical grounds, became virtually a requirement in descriptive pieces dealing with the region, while an escape from, or an attack by "revenooers" similarly became a conventional incident in mountain fiction. Suggestive of conventional literary images of banditti or outlaws caught in a historical process which they could neither understand nor control, these fictional confrontations between moonshiners and "foreigners" representing the legal and social standards of the larger community functioned to epitomize the tension between Appalachia and America, while reinforcing the accepted notion of Appalachia's historical character.

Feuds in the Southern mountains aroused less interest outside the region during this early period, at a time when such private wars could be dismissed as natural extensions of hostilities engendered by the Civil War. By the mid-1880's, feuding incidents began to appear with some frequency in short fictional pieces set in the mountains, as well as in descriptive sketches of mountain life, and by the end of the century the prevalence of feuding had become a conventional element in the popular conception of Appalachia as a strange land inhabited by a peculiar people. Like moonshining, feuding was viewed as a picturesque if somewhat unfortunate aspect of life in that isolated region of the nation, and was explained in historical terms as the result of the persistence of primitive social conditions and a correspondingly primitive form of social control, or else as the result of a persisting tendency toward violence among Southerners.

The outbreak of a new series of family wars around the turn of the century, and the subsequent extension of what had first appeared as private conflict into the arena of public affairs, involving local and then state and interstate politics, brought feuding as an aspect of mountain life to the attention of the nation in a new way.¹² Like moonshining, this new outbreak of feuds involved the mountaineers in a direct confrontation with the world of more normal American behavior, and in particular with the outsiders' institutions of social control. While the possibility of romanticization existed, then, to the degree that the feuds involved persons outside the immediate mountain community, the requirements of the social order in maintaining its viability demanded that this particular aspect of mountain life be defined pejoratively as "lawlessness," even as it demanded that the feudists themselves be convicted as lawbreakers and sentenced to terms in the penitentiary. More important from our point of view, however, accounts of the feuds which flourished around the turn of the century, when combined with the widely accepted notion of the prevalence of illegal distilling in the mountains, precipitated a redefinition of Appalachia as a land of violence and lawlessness.¹³

In and of itself this new emphasis involved nothing more than a more sharply focused conception of the nature of Appalachian otherness. A kind of aesthetic distance continued to separate the mountaineers as objects of popular interest from the writers and social workers who went among them and described their peculiar habits to the rest of America. In the context of a conventional description of the mountaineers as "our contemporary ancestors" and of mountain violence as a survival from an earlier stage of historical development, however, the identification of Appalachia as a lawless land created a dilemma within the American dialogue on the meaning of Appalachia's existence, and raised questions concerning the nature of American civilization as well. Over against an idyllic vision of mountaineers as hard-working pioneers, dependent on their own resources and initiative, was placed what seemed to be a more realistic picture, of pioneer individualism as anarchy, and self-help as anti-social behavior. If private justice yielded public chaos, if private enterprise involved the rejection of public morality, were our pioneer ancestors like our "contemporary ancestors," merely brawlers and brigands?

By the beginning of the twentieth century, of course, there were many who were quite prepared to admit that America's pioneer past was one of violence and anarchic individualism, preferring for that very reason the more civilized present in which egoism had given way to altruism. Indeed, that may well be said to have been the point of much of the rhapsodizing over vanishing frontiers which took place around the turn of the century. It was in any case a position commonly taken by writers on Appalachia in the early years of the twentieth century, and especially by those connected with agencies of social uplift for whom the persistence of the past into the present created irony rather than ambiguity. To them the historical character of mountain life was a kind of bad joke on the mountaineers, as well as a sign of their pressing need for assistance so that they might cast off a discredited or at least a useless past, and join the rest of the nation in the present.¹⁴

The identification of violence and lawlessness in the Southern mountains as a survival of the American past, which consistent definition of the mountaineers as "our contemporary ancestors" demanded, did create a dilemma nonetheless. What this meant in practice was that explanation of feuding and moonshining by reference to an historical situation came to be seen as inadequate or, to the degree that it unbalanced the equation of a known present and a presumed past, unsatisfactory. In the early twentieth century, as a consequence, two new emphases appeared in discussions of mountain life, which may be seen as responses to the conceptual dilemma which conditions of lawlessness in Appalachia created. The first of these involved identification of the more violent aspects of mountain life as

European rather than American in origin, thus permitting continued utilization of the doctrine of survivals while maintaining a traditional conception of the American past as rude but law-abiding. The second involved abandonment of the doctrine of survivals entirely and a new emphasis, in accord with general trends of early twentieth-century social theory, on environment as the determinant of social and cultural patterns. In these terms, Appalachia was seen to be characterized by frontier conditions but was no longer defined as The Frontier.

From the publication in 1878 of Rev. James Craighead's *Scotch and Irish Seeds in American Soil*,¹⁵ the mountaineers of Appalachia were conventionally assumed to be the descendants of Scottish and Scotch-Irish settlers from western North Carolina and Pennsylvania. This was a view which appealed particularly to the home-mission propagandists of the Presbyterian Church, who were enabled thereby to add the responsibilities of blood relationship to the humanitarian appeal of need in requesting funds for benevolent work among the mountaineers. Non-Presbyterians found the notion equally appealing, however. In part this was because it agreed with conventional notions about the patterns of westward migration during the late eighteenth century, but in part this was also the case because it identified the independent mountaineer with that group of colonists conventionally assumed to be the most "independent" in America's eighteenth-century population. The definition of mountain life as a survival of pioneer life was thus reinforced, albeit in a slightly different way.

It was with particular reference to the occurrence of feuds in the mountains that the somewhat ambiguous designation of the mountaineers as "American Highlanders" occurred, however, in an address by Secretary Charles J. Ryder of the Congregationalist American Missionary Association. "No other term so aptly describes these mountaineers as does Highlanders," Ryder noted in 1897:

They have Highland clans with Highland chieftains at the head of them. Highland feuds flame out now and again, often bringing death and ruin. Not only topographically but also socially the term of the American Highlanders fittingly describes these mountaineers. The relationship between the Lowlanders of the South and the Highlanders is also much the same as that which obtained [N.B.] between the same classes in Scotland....In general character and in physical endurance the comparison between the Highlanders of Scotland and America holds good.¹⁶

During the early years of the twentieth century, an increasing consciousness of violence as a characteristic of mountain life facilitated the transformation of Ryder's metaphor into a picture of reality, and the mountaineer as Highlander took his place alongside the mountaineer as contemporary ancestor in discussions of Appalachia. By 1916, John M.

Moore's classic mission-study text, *The South To-Day*, could complain that "the peculiarities of an individualistic people have been interpreted as hideous deficiencies." In fact, Moore asserted, the mountaineer was "the pure Scotch-Irishman, and in manners, beliefs, and speech his lineage can be traced...I found that Scott and Stevenson in their tales of the Campbells and MacGregors were describing the parties that were appearing in the later roles of feudists in Kentucky. The heads of feuds were no ordinary men in Kentucky than in Scotland."¹⁷ Feuding and moonshining, and a general proclivity to violent and lawless behavior, were thus explained as the result of a particular ethnic heritage rather than of an essentially lawless strain in the American national character, which the identification of violence as a survival of pioneer ways seemed to suggest. More desirable aspects of mountain life might continue to be identified with the American past, and hence be seen as quintessentially American, while the mountaineer himself was maintained in the morally neutral ground of middle-class romanticism.

The use of an environmental explanation for the peculiarities of Appalachia functioned in a similar way, as response to the dilemma which the occurrence of feuds and moonshining presented. Unlike explanation in terms of survivals, however, it did not emerge from within the American dialogue on the meaning of Appalachia as a result of the transformation of metaphor into a statement of reality. It involved instead the introduction of a kind of cultural relativism as a point of view into the literature on Appalachia, and of a new model of social change as a matter of adaptation rather than of development pure and simple. For the environmentalists, as a consequence, while "normal" American culture remained preferable, the legitimacy of a peculiar and indigenous mountain culture was neither denied nor denigrated by its identification with some earlier phase in the evolution of the normal American form. In "The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains: A Study in Anthropogeography," for example, Ellen Churchill Semple argued in what was to become the characteristic way that the apparent persistence of historical forms in the mountains might be better understood as a matter of adaptation to a particular environment. Utilitarian ethics, an independence of spirit bred by isolation and the necessity for self-reliance, an economy "severely limited in its possibilities" by lack of transportation facilities, were the circumstances in which feuding and moonshining developed as appropriate means of obtaining justice and disposing of a corn crop, respectively. "The same conditions which have kept the ethnic type pure have kept the social phenomena primitive," she noted, "with their natural concomitants of primitive ethics and primitive methods of social control."¹⁸

For the environmentalists, the critical fact which set Appalachia off

from America was not the occurrence of feuding and moonshining, the peculiarities of speech which had received such attention from the local color writers, the persistence of traditional folk song and traditional handicrafts, or even the log cabins which dotted the hillsides, but the absence of community. This was the cause from which all else, including the prevalence of violence in the region, followed. "Lack of good roads has caused an undue isolation, has prevented cooperative activity and the realization of the ideals of a modern community life," one commentator argued. An "over-developed individualism" has resulted "where there is no cohesive community life...[and] where local agencies are non-existent and non-local agencies inoperative," said another.¹⁹ Especially in the hands of Warren H. Wilson of the Presbyterian Department of Church and Country Life and John C. Campbell, Secretary of the Russell Sage Foundation's Southern Highland Division, the use of an environmentalist explanation for the peculiarities of Appalachia facilitated a redefinition of the region as "hyper-rural" and the perception of fundamental similarities among all such hyper-rural sections of the nation. "The question of the mountain dwellers is a national question," Campbell told the Home Missions Council in 1916. "You have it in your New England Hills, with less hope of solution it is sometimes felt, and although it is a larger question in the South, it is, after all, only a question of intensified rural conditions."²⁰

In such terms, the conflict between Appalachia and America became not a conflict between past and present but between rural and urban ways, and the occurrence of feuds and moonshining became social problems of a kind to be expected in rural regions where community was absent. Although substantial disagreement over how the much-needed sense of community might be provided in Appalachia characterized the environmentalists' discussion of the region—Campbell and Wilson for example urged education appropriate to rural conditions in order to establish a viable mountain culture, while Walter Hines Page, like Wilson a former member of Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, favored removal of the mountaineers to the industrial centers of the New South where the development of community would be natural rather than artificial²¹—so far as feuding and moonshining were concerned there was agreement. Unfiltered through the haze of romance, private justice was seen to yield public chaos, and individualism, in the absence of the controls which community provides, to breed lawlessness. The occurrence of violence in the Southern mountains, when explained as adaptation to environment, thus became an undesirable yet ultimately a temporary and remediable phenomenon, a distortion of the more basic and desirable qualities of independence and self-reliance characteristic of rural life generally and of

that special case of rural life which was Appalachia.

Resolution of the dilemma which the occurrence of feuding and moonshining in the Southern mountains posed did not eliminate violence from mountain life, of course, any more than it resolved the tension which the very existence of this strange land and peculiar people generated. Feuding and moonshining persisted as social problems, becoming in fact more acute as prohibition made the manufacture of whiskey increasingly profitable and as the so-called clan wars were complicated by the emergence of class conflict in the region during the later 1920's.²² Violence continued as a consequence to point up the distance between Appalachia and America. Even after the era of violence had ended, however, Appalachia remained an "other" America in the American consciousness, defined now in terms of one set of characteristics, now in terms of another. And as such, Appalachia has continued to prick our consciences and to challenge our notions of what American civilization is and what it ought to be. If we continue to respond ambiguously, it is better than that we fail to respond at all.

NOTES

¹The principal documents of our recent "rediscovery" of Appalachia, and our redefinition of Appalachian otherness as a matter of economic rather than cultural differences, include Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962); Harry M. Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1962); Thomas R. Ford, ed., *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962); and Jack E. Weller, *Yesterday's People: Life in Contemporary Appalachia* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1965). On the first discovery of Appalachia, see Henry D. Shapiro, "Strange Land and Peculiar People: The Discovery of Appalachia, 1870-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 1966). On the first discovery and its consequences, see Henry D. Shapiro, *Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1977).

²E. g., Thomas Wilson Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee* (Knoxville: Ogden Bros. & Co., 1888); Joseph E. Roy, *Americans of the Midland Mountains* (New York: American Missionary Assn., 1891); "A Scotch-Irishman [pseud.]," *The Mountain Whites of the South* (Pittsburgh: [Banner Publishing Co.], 1893); Mrs. S. M. Davis, "The 'Mountain Whites' of America," *Missionary Review of the World*, 8 (June 1895), 422-26. A late example is William Goodell Frost, "God's Plan for the Southern Mountains," *Biblical Review*, 6 (July 1921), 405-25.

³John Dwight Kern, *Constance Fenimore Woolson, Literary Pioneer* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1934); Rayburn S. Moore, *Constance Fenimore Woolson* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1963); James Lane Allen, "Local Color," *The Critic*, n.s., 5 (Jan. 9, 1886), 13-14, and "H.M.Alden," *The Bookman*, 50 (November 1919), 330-36; Grant Knight, *James Lane Allen and the Genteel Tradition* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1935); Edd Winfield Parks, *Charles Egbert Craddock (Mary Noailles Murfree)* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1941); Charles Dudley Warner, "On Horseback," *Atlantic Monthly*, 56 (July-

October 1885), 88-100, 194-207, 388-98, 540-54, and C.D. Warner correspondence, Century Collection, New York Public Library Manuscript Division; David Hunter Strother, "The Mountains," *Harper's Magazine*, April 1872-September 1875, *passim*; Cecil D. Eby, Jr., "Porte Crayon": *The Life of David Hunter Strother* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1960).

⁴Carvel E. Collins, "Nineteenth Century Fiction of the Southern Appalachians," *Bulletin of Bibliography*, 17 (October 1942 and January 1943), 186-90, 215-17; Henry D. Shapiro, "Strange Land and Peculiar People," 250 ff.

⁵Horace Spencer Fiske, *Provincial Types in American Prose Fiction* (Chautauqua, N.Y.: The Chautauqua Press, 1903), 1. Cf. Elizabeth Haven Appleton, "Half-Life and Half a Life," *Atlantic Monthly*, 13 (February 1864), 157-82; Edward H. Pollard, "The Virginia Tourist," *Lippincott's Magazine*, 5 (May 1870), 487-97; James Esten Cooke, "Owlet," *Harper's Magazine*, 57 (July 1878), 199-211.

⁶E.g., William D. Kelley, *The Old South and the New: A Series of Letters* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1887).

⁷N.S. Shaler, "Peculiarities of the South," *North American Review*, 151 (October 1890), 477-88; George H. Vincent, "A Retarded Frontier," *American Journal of Sociology*, 4 (July 1898), 1-20; Charles Dudley Warner, "On Horseback" (1885).

⁸James Lane Allen, "Through Cumberland Gap on Horseback," *Harper's Magazine*, 73 (June 1886), 50-66.

⁹Cf. Joseph E. Roy, *Americans of the Midland Mountains*; William Goodell Frost, "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains," *Atlantic Monthly*, 83 (March 1899), 311-19; Lillian Walker Williams, "In the Kentucky Mountains: Colonial Customs that Are Still Existing in that Famous Section of the Country," *New England Magazine*, n.s., 30 (March 1904), 37-45. It was to the problem posed by the apparent persistence of pioneer culture in the face of rapid economic and social change elsewhere in the nation that Ellen Churchill Semple and the environmentalists of the early twentieth century addressed themselves.

¹⁰Unsigned, "Novel Notes," *The Bookman*, 2 (January 1896), 434. "A Cumberland Vendetta" was first published in *The Century*, 48 (June-August 1894), 163-78, 366-73, 496-505, and was subsequently issued as *A Cumberland Vendetta and Other Stories* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1895). On Fox's treatment of mountain lawlessness generally see the excellent short study *John Fox, Jr.*, by Warren I. Titus (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969).

¹¹On mountain violence in literature, see Carvel E. Collins, "The Literary Tradition of the Southern Mountaineer, 1824-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1944); Isabella D. Harris, "The Southern Mountaineer in American Fiction, 1824-1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1948). Early reports of feuds and moonshining include: A.H. Gernsey, "Illicit Distillation of Liquors," *Harper's Weekly*, 11 (Dec. 7, 1867), 773, and "Hunting for Stills," *Harper's Weekly*, 11 (Dec. 21, 1867), 811; unsigned, "The Moonshine Man: A Peep into His Haunts and Hiding Places," *Harper's Weekly*, 21 (Oct. 21, 1877), 820-22; Young E. Allison, "Moonshine Men," *Southern Bivouac*, n.s., 2 (February 1887), 528-34; Francis Lynde, "The Moonshiners of Fact," *Lippincott's Magazine*, 57 (January 1896), 66-76; unsigned, "The Knell of the Kentucky Feud," *Scribner's Magazine*, 21 (May 1897), 660; J. Stoddard Johnston, "Romance and Tragedy of the Kentucky Feuds," *Cosmopolitan*, 27 (September 1899), 551-58; John Fox, Jr., "Manhunting in the Pound," *Outing*, 36 (July 1900), 344-50.

¹²On the Kentucky feuds, see Hartley Davis and Clifford Smyth, "Land of Feuds," *Munsey's Magazine*, 30 (November 1903), 161-72; R.L. McClure, "Mazes of a Kentucky Feud," *The Independent*, 55 (Sept. 17, 1903), 2216-24; O.O. Howard, "The Feuds in the Cumberland Mountains," *The Independent*, 56 (April 7, 1904), 783-88; *New York Times*, 1901-1905, *passim*; Charles G. Mutzenberg, *Kentucky's Famous Feuds and Tragedies: Authentic Histories of the World Renowned Vendettas of the Dark and Bloody Ground* (New York: R.F. Fenno, 1917).

While Kentucky was not all of Appalachia, it had traditionally received the most attention from local color writers, denominational home-mission personnel, and travel-writers, and provided the basis upon which generalizations about the region as a whole were made, at least until the organization of the Russell Sage Foundation's Southern Highland Division in 1908.

¹³Carvel E. Collins notes this in "Nineteenth Century Fiction of the Southern Appalachians" (see note 4). The shift is apparent in, e.g., the emphases of William Goodell Frost's articles of 1899 and 1900. The first, "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains," asks for a sympathetic understanding for "these eighteenth century neighbors and fellow countrymen of ours"; the second, "The Southern Mountaineer: Our Kindred of the Boone and Lincoln Type," *American Monthly Review of Reviews*, 21 (March 1900), 303-11, seeks to explain away the feuds by identifying mountaineer "individualism" as an historical trait.

¹⁴Frost, "Our Contemporary Ancestors." Cf. his "Educational Pioneering in the Southern Mountains," National Education Association, *Addresses and Proceedings*, 14 (1901), 555-60, and "Our Southern Highlanders," *The Independent*, 72 (April 4, 1912), 708-14; John Fox, Jr., *The Kentuckians* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1898), and "The Southern Mountaineer," *Scribner's Magazine*, 29 (April-May 1901), 387-99, 557-70.

¹⁵James G. Craighead, *Scotch and Irish Seeds in American Soil* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1878).

¹⁶Charles J. Ryder, "Our American Highlanders: Problems and Progress," *Education*, 18 (October 1897), 67, 69. Ryder coined the term in an address to the American Missionary Association in 1892 (*ibid.*, 67), published as *The Debt of Our Country to the American Highlanders During the War* (New York: American Missionary Association, [1896]).

¹⁷John M. Moore, *The South To-Day* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the U.S. and Canada, 1916), 127-28, 132-33.

¹⁸Ellen Churchill Semple, "The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains: A Study in Anthropogeography," *Geographical Journal* (London), 17 (June 1901), 616; reprinted in *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, 42 (August 1910), 561-94. See also George E. Vincent, "A Retarded Frontier," *American Journal of Sociology*, 4 (July 1898), 1-20; James Mooney, "Folk-Lore of the Carolina Mountains," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 2 (April-June 1889), 95-104; S.S. MacClintock, "The Kentucky Mountains and their Feuds," *American Journal of Sociology*, 7 (July-September 1901), 1-28, 171-87; McClure, "Mazes of a Kentucky Feud"; Howard, "The Feuds in the Cumberland Mountains."

¹⁹Mary Verhoeff, *The Kentucky Mountains. Transportation and Commerce, 1750-1911: A Study in the Economic History of a Coal Field*, Filson Club Publication No. 26 (Louisville: John P. Morton & Co., 1911), 183-84; John C. Campbell, "Social Betterment in the Southern Mountains," National Conference of Charities and Correction, *Proceedings*, 36 (1909), 137.

²⁰John C. Campbell, "Mountain and Rural Fields in the South," [*Annual Report of the Home Missions Council, 1916* ([New York, 1916)], 180. On Campbell, see John M. Glenn et al., *Russell Sage Foundation, 1907-1946* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1947), 1, 62 ff.; Henry D. Shapiro, "Introduction," in John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1969), xxii-xxxi, and *Appalachia On Our Mind*, esp. ch. 7. Some discussion of Wilson's activities will be found in Betty Carol Clutts, "Country Life Aspects of the Progressive Movement" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1962).

²¹Walter Hines Page, ["Editorial Note"], *The World's Work*, 19 (March 1910), 12704. See also Thomas Dawley, "Our Southern Mountaineers: Removal the Remedy for the Evils that Isolation and Poverty Have Brought," *The World's Work*, 19 (March 1910), 12704-14; Walter A. Dyer, "Training New Leaders for the Industrial South," *The World's Work*, 28 (July 1914),

285-92; William L. Hall, "To Remake the Appalachians: A New Order in the Mountains that is Founded on Forestry," *The World's Work*, 28 (July 1914), 321-38.

²²Conditions in Appalachia since the 1920's are conveniently summarized in Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*.

On the Naming of Appalachia

DAVID S. WALLS

The circumstances surrounding the naming of Appalachia are as hazy as a mid-summer's day in the Blue Ridge. A widespread legend has it that Hernando De Soto or the surviving members of his expedition named the mountains. Henry Gannett in *The Origin of Certain Place Names in the United States*, published in 1905, writes, "The name was given by the Spaniards under De Soto, who derived it from the name of a neighboring tribe, the Apalachi." He also notes that one Brinton "holds its radical to be the Muscogee *apala*, 'great sea,' or 'great ocean,' and that *apalache* is a compound of this word with the Muscogee personal participle '*chi*' and means 'those by the sea.'"¹ The *North Carolina Gazetteer* by William S. Powell uses almost the same words, but offers a different translation: "The name was given by Spaniards under De Soto in 1539 for the Apalachee Indians whose name meant 'people on the other side' (of a river presumably)."² The second edition of *Webster's Dictionary* is similar: "The mountains were called Appalachian by the Spaniards under De Soto, after the Apalachee Indians."³ Richard Drake, in a survey of the emergence of the concept of Appalachia, also accepts this account: "De Soto became lost in the maze of the southern Blue Ridge in 1540, and named the mountains for the Indians who dominated their approach."⁴

In the face of this consensus it is surprising to find no evidence in the surviving accounts of the De Soto expedition to support the claim that either the conquistador or any of his companions ever intended to designate the eastern mountain chain for the Apalachee Indians, who lived in what is now northern Florida, a considerable distance from the mountains. Whether the mountains actually were termed something like "Appalachian" by one or another Indian tribe may never be clear. The best explanation of the De Soto legend may be that the early mapmakers, confused by the vague accounts of locations and distances given by the Spanish explorers, transposed the territory of the Apalachee further north.

Tracing the origin of the name requires that three distinct designations of "Appalachian" or its variants be distinguished: an Indian tribe, a village or province, and a mountain range. The first encounter of Europeans with the Apalachee tribe was recorded by the expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez, which landed in Florida in the vicinity of Tampa Bay in April 1528. The story is related by Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, who was one of four sur-

vivors of the Narváez expedition to return to Spain. Within a few days of Narváez' landing, a scouting party along the shore found pieces of cloth, items possibly of European origin, and traces of gold. "Having by signs asked the Indians whence these things came, they motioned to us that very far from there, was a province called Apalachen, where was much gold, and so the same abundance in Apalachen of everything that we at all cared for."⁵ Perhaps the riches of Apalachen were augmented by the Indians' eagerness to be rid of the Spaniards.

Two months later the Narváez expedition reached the village of Apalachen, probably near Lake Miccosukee in northern Florida. The Spaniards found a land rich in corn and game, but instead of treasure they received only harassment from the native residents. Less than a month after their arrival, the members of the expedition had had enough, as Cabeza de Vaca describes: "In view of the poverty of the land, the unfavorable accounts of the population and of everything else we heard, the Indians making continual war upon us, wounding our people and horses at the places where they went to drink, shooting from the lakes with such safety to themselves that we could not retaliate...we determined to leave that place and go in quest of the sea...."⁶ But the myth of the riches of Apalachen survived the rude reality of the place.

In 1539 the expedition of Hernando De Soto spent the winter months at the village of "Apalache," no doubt the same place visited by Cabeza de Vaca. Having heard stories of gold in a distant country, De Soto began a march north through present-day Georgia toward the mountains in March 1540. From the accounts that survive, neither De Soto nor any members of his party designated the areas in or near the mountains as Appalachian. The Gentleman of Elvas is clear that the mountainous regions were called the provinces of Chalaque and Qualla by the native inhabitants. Similar terms appear in the accounts of Luys Hernández de Biedma and Rodrigo Ranjel, factor and secretary respectively to the De Soto expedition. Surprisingly, no such term as Apalache appears at any point on the so-called De Soto map, on which are inscribed 127 names and legends.⁷

Diego Gutiérrez is the first mapmaker to record a variation of Appalachian. On his map of America, published in 1562, "Apalchen" appears to the north of mountains which are shown stretching from east to west inland from a rather inaccurate coastline (Fig. 1). This map may have been made before 1554, in which case the account of Cabeza de Vaca must have been the source of the term.⁸ In any case, the region is far removed from the home of the Apalachee tribe near the Gulf of Mexico in northwestern Florida. Zaltieri's "Map of the Discovery of New France," published in 1566, follows Gutiérrez in locating the region of Apalchen roughly in the center of a truncated continent, some distance from Florida.⁹

Honors for designating the mountain range Appalachian must go to Jacques le Moyne de Morgues, an artist who traveled with the French Huguenot expedition of René de Laudonnière to Florida in 1564. The expedition constructed Ft. Caroline at the mouth of the St. John's River (named the River of May by Jean Ribaut) on the east coast of Florida. Stories of precious metals from the mountains led to several attempts to forge alliances with Indian tribes that would give the French access to the mountains. Le Moyne never actually travelled north to the mountains, but he did paint a scene of Indians collecting gold from the streams running from the "Apalatcy Mountains." The description with the engraving of the scene notes:

A great way from the place where our fort was built, are great mountains, called in the Indian language Apalatcy; in which, as the map shows, arise three great rivers, in the sands of which are found much gold, silver, and brass, mixed together. Accordingly, the natives dig ditches in these streams, into which the sand brought down by the current falls by gravity. Then they collect it out, and carry it away to a place by itself, and after a time collect again what continues to fall in. Then they convey it in canoes down the great river which we named the River of May, and which empties into the sea. The Spaniards have been able to use for their advantage the wealth thus obtained.¹⁰

This is the strongest evidence we have that the mountains were termed Appalachian in some Indian language. How reliable is this derivation? Le Moyne and the other French explorers under Ribaut and Laudonnière were no doubt familiar with the narratives of the Narváez and De Soto expeditions and their stories of the wealthy province of Apalache. The only maps available at the time placed Apalache or Apalchen in the vicinity of the mountains. The Huguenots could have been expected to ask Indians about gold in the mountains of Apalache. For their part, the Indians would have indicated the mountains as the source of such gold and copper as they may have acquired. Did the French put the name Apalatchi into the mouths of the Indians or was it a native term? With the evidence at hand, it is impossible to say. What is certain is that Le Moyne's map, "The Province of Florida in America" (Fig. 2), is the first to clearly name the mountains as Appalachian. Inscriptions on the map read "Montes Apalatchi, in quibus aurum argentum & aes invenitur" ("in which gold, silver and copper are found"), and in the lake fed by the waterfall, "In hoc lacu Indigenae argenti grana inveniunt" ("In this lake the natives find grains of silver"). A village of Apalatchi is also identified.

In 1586 Richard Hakluyt took a statement from a Spaniard, Pedro Morales, taken prisoner by Sir Frances Drake in Florida. Morales noted that "Three score leagues up to the Northwest from Saint Helena are the mountains of the golde and Chrystall Mines, named Apalatchi." Hakluyt added, "He saith also that he hath seene a rich Diamond which was brought from the mountaines that lye up in the countrey Westward from S.

Helena. These hills seeme wholly to be the mountaines of Apalatchi, whereof the Savages advertised Laudonnière...."¹¹

Le Moyne managed to escape the massacre of the Huguenots by the Spanish under Menéndez de Avilés and return to France in 1565. His map, which is customarily dated 1565, was not actually published until after his death when the map and paintings of the new world were purchased by Theodore de Bry, who brought out an illustrated edition on the French expeditions in 1591. Thus, perhaps fortunately, Le Moyne's version of the Appalachians was not available to Gerard Mercator in preparing his world map of 1569 (Fig. 3), which "is the first map to show the Appalachians as a continuous mountain range stretching parallel to the coast in a southwest-northeasterly direction....Mercator's delineation of the southern mountain region by a roughly inverted Y is in general not improved until the early part of the eighteenth century."¹² There is no indication that Mercator named these mountains Appalachian, however. Apalchen on his map appears to designate the region between the forks of the Y of the mountains, drained by the "River Sola" (probably the Savannah River).

Once published, Le Moyne's map had considerable influence. In 1597 Corneille Wytfliet published a map of "Florida and Apalche" (Fig. 4) which terms as Apalche the territory between Virginia and Florida (north of the Rivers Secco and Sola, or Savannah River).¹³ Jodocus Hondius published an edition of Mercator's atlas in 1606 with a revised map of the southeast that shows Le Moyne's waterfall and lake, his inscriptions about precious metals, and the "Apalatcy Montes auriferi," or "golden Appalachian Mountains." William Cumming comments on the impact of Le Moyne's map: "The map contains many striking details, frequently erroneous, which were incorporated in other maps for over a hundred and fifty years. It was Le Moyne's misfortune to have many of his errors incorporated and even exaggerated in Mercator's map of 1606, upon which for half a century much of the subsequent cartography of the region was based."¹⁴

During the eighteenth century, the term Allegheny emerged as the principal rival to Appalachian. By convention the southern half of the eastern mountain chain was known as the Appalachians and the northern half the Alleghenies.¹⁵ The overall designation alternated between the two. Ambivalence about the appropriate term for the entire region is apparent in Washington Irving's proposal for a more accurate name for the country than "United States of America." In a letter to the editor of the *The Knickerbocker* in 1839 signed "Geoffrey Crayon," Irving suggested, perhaps tongue in cheek:

We have it in our power to furnish ourselves with such a national appellation, from one of the grand and eternal features of our country; from that noble chain of mountains which

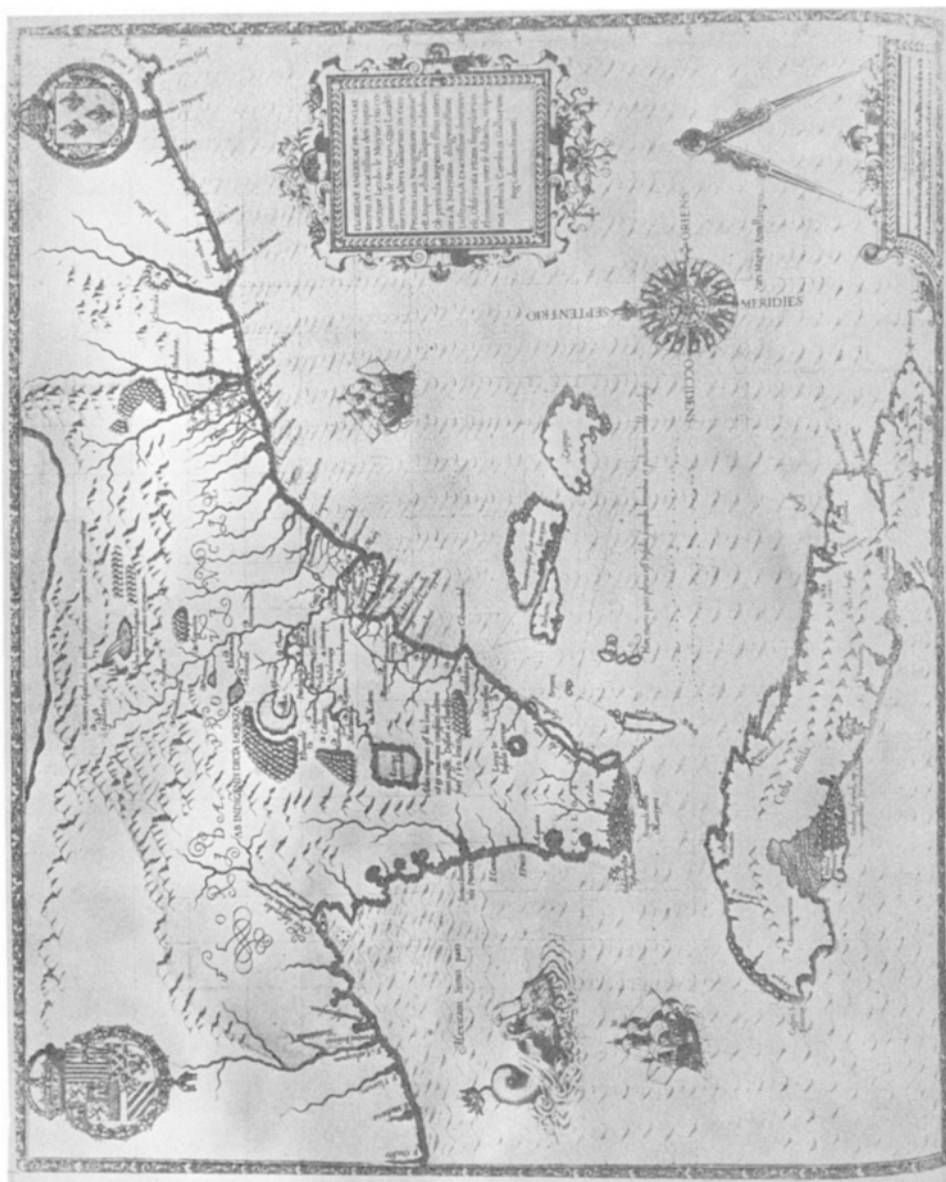
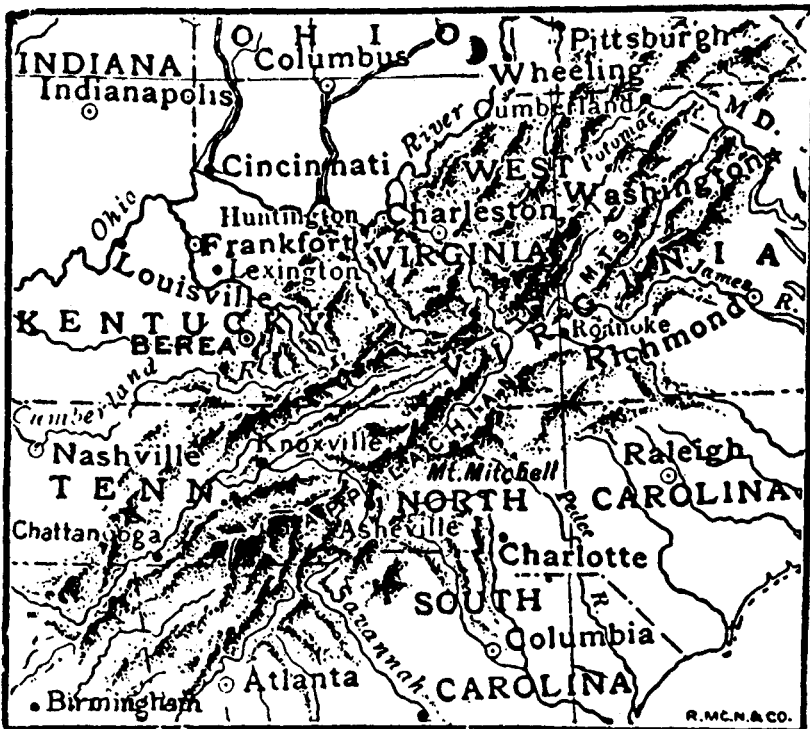
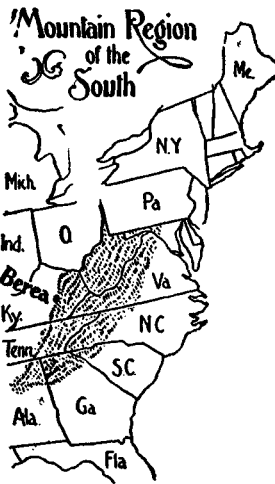


Fig. 2. Le Moyne, "The Province of Florida in America," 1565. Source: Fite and Freeman, *A Book of Old Maps*, p. 68.



Fig. 3. From Mercator's "Map of the World," 1569. Source: Cumming, Skelton, and Quinn, *The Discovery of North America*, p. 93.



APPALACHIAN AMERICA

Fig. 5. Frost's maps of Appalachia, ca. 1900. Source: Frost, *For the Mountains*, pp. 3, 54.

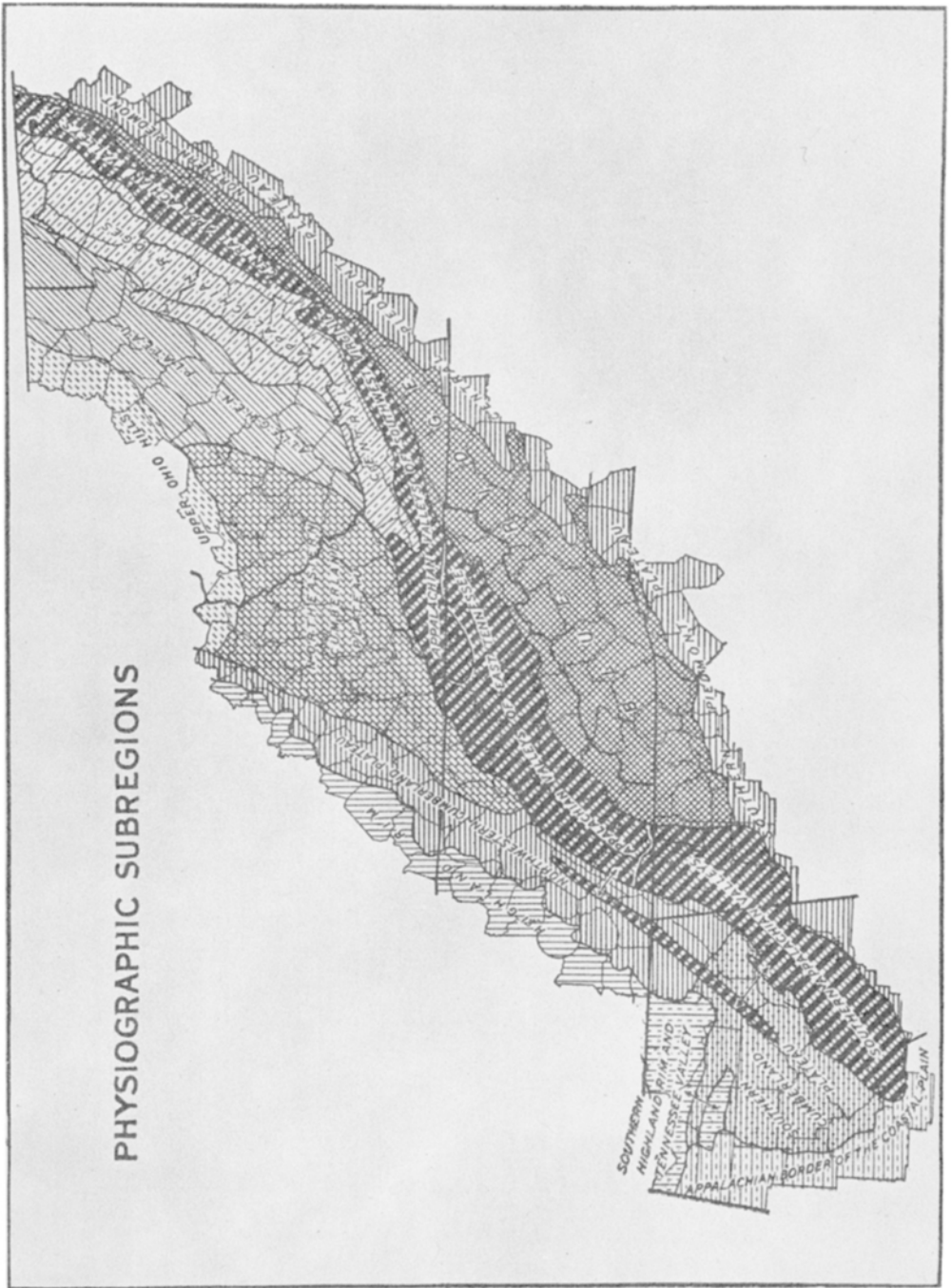


Fig. 6. Marschner's "Physiographic Subregions," 1935. Source: U.S.D.A., *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*, p. 11.

formed its backbone, and ran through the "old confederacy," when it first declared our national independence: I allude to the Appalachian or Allegheny mountains. We might do this without any very inconvenient change in our present titles. We might still use the phrase "The United States," substituting Appalachia, or Alleghenia, (I should prefer the latter,) in place of America. The title of Appalachian, or Alleghenian, would still announce us as Americans, but would specify us as citizens of the Great Republic. Even our old national cypher of U.S.A. might remain unaltered, designating the United States of Alleghenia.¹⁶

This is probably the first appearance in print of the term Appalachia;¹⁷ the Latinized suffix *-ia* was in vogue at the time in forming names of states or countries.

Irving wasn't the only one to show a preference for Allegheny over Appalachian. The 1860 census, for example, in a study of mortality rates in "the great natural divisions," terms the area "From Pennsylvania through Virginia, Eastern Tennessee, &c., to Northern Alabama" as "The Allegheny Region."¹⁸ An article published by geographer Arnold Henry Guyot in 1861 is credited with establishing scientific and popular usage for the entire mountain range. Evidently, Guyot also had difficulty deciding which term is more appropriate: "He apparently hesitated between the names. His map, prepared in advance, used Allegheny, but his final title was *On the Appalachian Mountain System*."¹⁹ Guyot naturally notes the east to west division of the Appalachian system into parallel chains of mountains separated from the plateaus by the Great Appalachian Valley, and he also proposed dividing the system from north to south into three areas: the northern division, from the Adirondacks to the Gaspé Peninsula in Canada; the middle or central division from New York south of the Mohawk to the New River; and the southern division from the New River to the extremity of the system. He also places the central and southern division together in a southern section. Guyot's authority was followed by John Wesley Powell in his *Physiographic Regions of the United States*,²⁰ which designates the eastern mountains from New York to Alabama as the Appalachian Ranges. Powell introduces a new twist, however, by terming the entire upland area to the west of the Appalachian mountain ranges the Allegheny Plateaus. He also uses the New River as a dividing line between what he calls the northern and southern Appalachian ranges.

At this point our survey shifts emphasis from geographic nomenclature, now firmly established, to Appalachia as a cultural region and a social and economic problem area. Until the Civil War, "the Appalachians" was simply a term for a physiographic section of mountains. There was little to distinguish the way of life there from life generally on the American frontier. The "discovery" of Appalachia as a distinctive cultural region was led by the writers of the "local color" movement who began in the mid-1870's

to use the mountaineer as a subject of fiction and travel sketches published in popular national magazines. Carvel Collins records that between 1875 and 1900 "more than two hundred novels and stories were published which described the hill people as quaint and isolated, living peculiar lives in the shadow of awe-inspiring peaks."²¹ Three underlying social and historical forces contributed to the discovery of the traditional subculture of the Southern Appalachians in the period following the Civil War: the mountaineer's loyalty to the Union, the end of the frontier, and the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism. The first served to distinguish the mountaineer from other Southern whites, and the second and third made him appear an anachronism in comparison to the mythical mainstream American.

Educators and social reformers sought to define this Southern Appalachian cultural region as a social problem area deserving the attention of church home mission boards and private philanthropic foundations. The first person to give a precise geographic definition to the Southern Appalachians as a cultural region was William G. Frost, President of Berea College from 1892 to 1920. Together with his former student, C.W. Hayes, then working for the Geological Survey, Frost identified 194 counties he called "the Mountain Region of the South" in 1894. He announced this discovery of "a new pioneer region in the mountains of the Central South" in 1895, and went on to elaborate his view in several articles in national magazines (Fig. 5). The most influential of these is "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March 1899, in which Frost describes the region as "The mountainous back yards of nine states...one of God's grand divisions, and in default of any other name we shall call it Appalachian America."²² Frost's lead was followed by a number of writers including Samuel Tyndale Wilson, Horace Kephart (who gets credit for reintroducing the term Appalachia), and James Watt Raine.²³

The landmark study and definition of the region was made by John C. Campbell in *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* published in 1921.²⁴ Campbell includes sections of the same nine states from Maryland to Alabama identified by Frost, but expands the number of counties included to 254. He identifies three parallel divisions: the Blue Ridge Belt and the Allegheny-Cumberland Belt, with the Greater Appalachian Valley in between. Campbell's initiative in organizing the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers in 1913 and his ties with the Russell Sage Foundation provided the organizational and financial base for a small but persistent social movement to secure an adequate private and public response to the problems of the Southern Appalachians. It was largely the Conference (later the Council of the Southern Mountains), Berea College, and their

magazine *Mountain Life & Work*, launched in 1925, that sustained the relative handful of educators, ministers, and community workers who kept alive through thick and thin the idea of Appalachia as a distinctive cultural and social problem region.²⁵

Campbell always preferred the designation "Southern Highlands" for the region. Discussing his reasons for this choice, Campbell wrote, "Southern Appalachians is a term sometimes used, but inasmuch as this term is limited by geographers [evidently a reference to Guyot and Powell] to that part of the Appalachian mountain system lying south of the New River Divide in southern Virginia, some other name for the whole territory under consideration is necessary. The designation Southern Mountains has also been used. But because so often descriptions of depressed social conditions, which are true only of limited areas, have been given without qualification as existing throughout the Southern mountains, this term has come to carry with it the implication that such conditions prevail generally throughout the region." After a lyrical passage describing the beauty of the mountain country and its romantic folk tradition, Campbell concludes "there is but one name that will do it justice—the Southern Highlands."²⁶ A more convincing explanation of Campbell's evoking the image of highland Scotland may be found in his effort to overcome the myth of the degenerate race of "mountain whites" that appeared in some stories of the local color writers after 1889, and in the historical works of John Fiske and others.²⁷ Campbell contrasts to this genetic argument an environmental explanation centered on isolation, "while establishing the mountaineer in the morally favorable ground of middle-class Romanticism," as Henry Shapiro comments.²⁸ But as these issues lost their salience, Campbell's argument against the common usage of Southern Appalachians had little impact despite the classic character of his study.

The federal government made its first acknowledgement of Appalachia as a social problem by its comprehensive survey, *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*, published in 1935. The U.S. Department of Agriculture was encouraged to support the study by a cluster of organizations including the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, the Home Missions Council, the Council of Women for Home Missions, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and Community Church Workers. The first of a series of conferences that led to the study was held at the Russell Sage Foundation in 1929. The USDA study contains a section by F.J. Marschner which divides Southern Appalachia into three major divisions: the eastern or Blue Ridge, the central or Appalachian Valleys and Ridges, and the western or Appalachian Plateaus. He then divides these divisions into 16 physiographic

subregions (Fig. 6). Marschner's delineation contains 236 counties in nine states; the rest of the USDA study limits itself to 205 counties in six states (Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia).²⁹

This modest recognition as a social problem area did not lead in the 1930's to any federal government efforts aimed at the Southern Appalachian region as such. The major New Deal regional development program, the Tennessee Valley Authority, included a portion of the Southern Appalachians, but its origins were in the dispute over the Muscle Shoals dam begun during the First World War. It was conceived as an example of river basin development by a public authority and had little relation to the work of the people promoting Southern Appalachia as a social problem area. Nor did the Appalachian advocates persuade one major regionalist, Howard W. Odum, whose influential *Southern Regions of the United States* does not include Appalachia among its divisions.³⁰

The various efforts to develop a national system of regional classification that were undertaken in the late 1930's did not adopt the broad definition of Southern Appalachia used in the two classic studies of the area. In the Works Progress Administration study *Rural Regions of the United States*, A.R. Mangus falls back on the traditional usage of an Allegheny Region including parts of Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and an Appalachian Region including parts of Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia. Another multi-county delineation, the State Social Subregions, was established for the 1940 census; it was modified to the State Economic Area system in the 1950 census which has continued in use to the present.³¹

The low ebb in the movement to identify Appalachia as a social problem in the public consciousness appears to have been reached in the late 1940's and early 1950's. In 1949 the Russell Sage Foundation ended its support of the Council of Southern Mountain Workers and *Mountain Life & Work*; the magazine was discontinued until revived with the help of Berea College faculty in 1950. Council activities and funding increased gradually following the hiring of Perley Ayer as executive director in 1951. A symposium, *Regionalism in America*, that ignores Appalachia was published in 1951.³² Not until 1957 were two organizational efforts set in motion that would lead to a commitment by the federal government to alleviate Appalachian problems. In that year W.D. Weatherford, a YMCA leader who had been recruited to the Board of Trustees of Berea College in 1916 by William Frost, approached the Ford Foundation with an idea for a comprehensive survey of the Southern Appalachians that would update the 1935 USDA study. Southern Appalachian Studies, Inc., received \$250,000 for the research which was published as *The Southern Ap-*

palachian Region: A Survey in 1962.³³ The survey covers 190 counties in seven states from West Virginia through Alabama (excluding Maryland and South Carolina). The delineation is based on the State Economic Area system from the 1950 census, and includes only those SEA's composed entirely of Appalachian counties. After publication of the study, the Ford Foundation gave a \$250,000 grant to the Council of the Southern Mountains to expand its community development work in the region.

Also in 1957 eastern Kentucky was hit by the most devastating flood in memory. In response to the disaster, Governor Bert Combs appointed the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission; John D. Whisman, whose ideas have played an important part in subsequent Appalachian development programs, served as its executive director. On January 1, 1960, the Commission issued a report, *Program 60: A Decade of Action for Progress in Eastern Kentucky*, which called for a broad range of development programs for the area, and also suggested that an Appalachian States Development Authority be established.³⁴ In response, the Conference of Appalachian Governors was organized at a meeting in Maryland in May 1960 at the invitation of Governor Millard Tawes, and received a study, "The Appalachian Region," prepared by the Maryland Department of Economic Development on an eleven-state area from New York to Alabama (excluding Ohio). At the same time, national attention was drawn to the conditions of the Appalachian coalfields by the presidential primary in West Virginia on May 10.³⁵ John F. Kennedy's debt to the region for his primary victory over Hubert Humphrey led to a meeting with the Appalachian governors in May 1961. Another meeting in 1963 led to the appointment on April 9 of the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, with Whisman as Executive Secretary, which presented its report to Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. The report refers to 340 counties in ten states from Pennsylvania to Alabama (excluding South Carolina, and with reservations about Ohio whose governor declined to sign the report).³⁶

On March 9, 1965, President Johnson signed the Appalachian Regional Development Act and made the social and economic development problems of the area an official concern of national public policy. The Act established the Appalachian Regional Commission, with responsibilities for portions of twelve states; in August the Commission invited New York to participate in the program under provisions of the Act. New York accepted, and a total of 373 counties were then covered by the ARC. The 1967 amendments to the ARDA joined 20 counties of Mississippi to Appalachia, and also added one county from Tennessee, two from Alabama, and one from New York, for the current total of 397 counties in thirteen states.³⁷ Political criteria for inclusion in Appalachia have superseded historical, cultural, social, or economic factors. Whisman continues his

major role in the development of the Commission, serving first as the Governor's Representative for Kentucky and then as the States' Regional Representative since July 1966.

The 1967 *Annual Report* of the ARC outlines the "Four Appalachias," defined by the varying economic bases of the subregions. Northern Appalachia is seen in transition from a coal-steel-railroad economy to new types of manufacturing and service industries. Central Appalachia is focused on the coalfields of eastern Kentucky, southern West Virginia, southwest Virginia, and northern Tennessee. Southern Appalachia is rapidly converting from an agricultural economy to an urban and industrialized one. The Appalachian Highlands includes the Alleghenies, Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains from New York to Georgia, a thinly populated region with potential for recreation and tourism. In 1974 the ARC merged the Highlands into the other three subregions.³⁸

In terms of social problems, the economy of Central Appalachia remains in persistent difficulty. Some 35 percent of the population lives in poverty by federal standards, two-and-a-half times the national average; per capita income is only 60 percent of the national average.³⁹ This alone should insure that Appalachia remain on the public agenda for some time to come. Yet as even the Central Appalachian region draws closer to national "norms" of poverty, Appalachian problems are likely to be seen more as national than regional in character. Solutions may be found only in answers to the national problems of providing full employment, adequate income maintenance, health care and decent housing for all, environment protection, public control of natural resources, and democratization of such public corporations as the TVA. Thus it is possible that interest in defining Appalachia as a distinctive social problem area will decline; certainly the focus will be narrowed from the current thirteen-state ARC definition.

The naming and redefining of Appalachia appears to have no end. I have traced the designations of the region from physiographic nomenclature to cultural area, to social and economic problem, and finally to an exercise in political logrolling. Clearly there is no ultimate definition, only delineations that serve particular social, political, organizational, or academic interests. Overall, the social movement to obtain recognition for Appalachia as a problem area must be accorded a remarkable success for a movement which never developed a mass following within the region itself.⁴⁰ "Appalachian," after all, has never become a symbol of self-identification for the vast majority of the region's people, for whom the community, county, state, and nation remain more important units of political identity.⁴¹ Despite the apparent decline in those features of the traditional mountain subculture supposedly characteristic of the region,⁴²

interest in aspects of Appalachian culture is on the increase, as evidenced by the popularity of books on the region's folk arts, Appalachian Studies programs, and this Appalachian Symposium. As long as the people of the region value their distinctive heritage, Appalachia by one definition or another, under one name or another, will continue to make an important contribution to American life.

NOTES

I wish to acknowledge, with great appreciation, the assistance provided by Dr. Richard Boulind, Curator of Maps, Manuscripts, and Prints of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. He suggested numerous references and checked a number of early maps for me. Responsibility for any errors or omissions in this account is, of course, my own.

¹2nd ed., U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin No. 258 (Washington: GPO, 1905), 27. Gannett's source is evidently ethnographer Daniel G. Brinton. A description of the Apalachee tribe is given in John R. Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin No. 137 (Washington: GPO, 1946), 89-91; see also Brinton, *The Floridian Peninsula* (1859; rpt. New York: Paladin Press, 1969), Ch. 2, 92-110.

²(Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1968), 11.

³*Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1953), 128. The 3rd edition (1971) is prudently silent on the question of who named the Appalachians and is content to note a probable derivation from Apalachee.

⁴"Appalachian America: The Emergence of a Concept, 1895-1964," *Mountain Life & Work*, 40 (Spring 1965), 6.

⁵"The Narrative of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca," ed. Frederick W. Hodge, in *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528-1543*, a volume in the series *Original Narratives of Early American History*, ed. J. Franklin Jameson (New York: Scribners, 1907), Ch. 4, 21-2.

⁶*Ibid.*, 31. Their reception in Apalachen is covered in Chs. 6 and 7, 28-33. The identification of the region with wealth is captured in the title of the fictionalized version of Cabeza de Vaca's explorations by Frank G. Slaughter, *Apalachee Gold* (1954; rpt. New York: Pocket Books, 1974).

⁷"The Narrative of the Expedition of Hernando de Soto, by the Gentleman of Elvas," ed. Theodore H. Lewis, in *Spanish Explorers*, Chs. 12-15, 160-81. See also "Relation of the Conquest of Florida by Luys Hernández de Biedma," trans. from the original document by Buckingham Smith; and "A Narrative of De Soto's Expedition Based on the Diary of Rodrigo Ranjel," by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, trans. Edward Gaylord Bourne, in *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto*, Vol. II (1904; rpt. New York: Allerton, 1922). On the so-called De Soto map, probably by Alonso de Santa Cruz and commonly dated ca. 1544, see William P. Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1958), 10-12, 113-15, and Plate 5. Swanton in *Indians of the Southeastern United States* presents an interesting reconstruction and map of the De Soto expedition's route, 39-59.

⁸See 115 and Plate 6 in Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*. The earliest published accounts mentioning the Apalache tribe and the village of Apalchen are the *Relacion* of Cabeza de Vaca (Zamora, 1542), Ranjel's diary in Oviedo's *Historia General y Natural de las Indias* (Salamanca, 1547), and the *Relacam* of the Gentleman of Elvas (Evora, 1557). The history of the De Soto expedition by Garcilaso de la Vega, *La Florida del Inca* (Lisbon, 1605) could not have influenced the sixteenth-century mapmakers. The authoritative source for dating these

early documents is Joseph Sabin, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, from Its Discovery to the Present Time*, 29 vols. (New York: 1868-1936; rpt. Amsterdam: N. Israel, 1961-62).

⁹The map of Zaltieri, also known as Zalterius of Bologna, is No. 21 in Emerson D. Fite and Archibald Freeman, *A Book of Old Maps Delineating American History* (New York: Dover, 1969), 72-4.

¹⁰This translation is by G. B. Watts, as quoted in W.P. Cumming, R.A. Skelton, and D.B. Quinn, *The Discovery of North America* (New York: American Heritage Press, 1971), 187. Le Moyne's map is reproduced in color on 175. The map is No. 20 in Fite and Freeman, *A Book of Old Maps*, 68-70. See also Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 124-5 and Plate 15. The narrative of Le Moyne and the engravings by De Bry based on the lost paintings of Le Moyne are contained in *The New World: The First Pictures of America*, ed. Stefan Lorant, rev. ed. (1946; rpt. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965). I have used the translation by Watts rather than that provided by Lorant on 117; Lorant's reads more smoothly in English, but is less detailed and literal and omits the reference to Apalatcy deriving from an Indian language.

¹¹"The Relation of Pedro Morales," No. 138 in *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590*, ed. David Beers Quinn, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1955), 761-3.

¹²Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 2. See *Gerard Mercator's Map of the World (1569)*, Publicaties Van Het Maritiem Museum "Prins Hendrick" No. 6 (Rotterdam: 's-Gravenhage, 1961), sheet 5.

¹³Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 17, 127, and Plate 17.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 124. For the Mercator-Hondius map, see 129-131 and Plate 20.

¹⁵For examples of eighteenth century maps, see William Faden, "The British Colonies in North America" (1777) and J. Carver, "A New Map of North America" (1778) in Fite and Freeman, *A Book of Old Maps*, Nos. 59 and 70, 232-4 and 274-7.

¹⁶*The Knickerbocker*, August 1839, 161; reprinted in the various editions of Irving's *Collected Works* under the title "National Nomenclature." On names for the nation, see George R. Stewart, *Names on the Land* (New York: Random House, 1945), Ch. 19, 169-74; and H. L. Mencken, "Names for Americans," *American Speech*, 22 (December 1947), 241-56.

¹⁷It is the first appearance cited in *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles*, ed. Mitford M. Mathews (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951), 37.

¹⁸Joseph C.G. Kennedy, Superintendent of Census, *Population of the United States in 1860: The Eighth Census* (Washington: GPO, 1864), xlii-xliii.

¹⁹Stewart, *Names on the Land*, 334. The original article is Arnold Guyot, "On the Appalachian Mountain System," *American Journal of Science and Arts*, 2nd Series, 31 (March 1861), 157-87. For background on Guyot, see Myron H. Avery and Kenneth S. Boardman, "Arnold Guyot's Notes on the Geography of the Mountain District of Western North Carolina," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, 15 (July 1938), 251-4.

²⁰National Geographic Monographs, Vol. I, No. 3, May 1895 (New York: American Book Company).

²¹Carvel Emerson Collins, "Nineteenth Century Fiction of the Southern Appalachians," *Bulletin of Bibliography*, 17 (Sept.-Dec. 1942 and Jan.-April 1943), 186-90, 215-18. The early literature on Appalachia is discussed in two dissertations: Cratis Dearl Williams, "The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction" (New York University, 1961), serialized in an abridged version edited by Martha H. Pipes in Vol. 3 of the quarterly *Appalachian Journal* (Fall 1975-Summer 1976); and Henry David Shapiro, "A Strange Land and Peculiar People: The Discovery of Appalachia, 1870-1920" (Rutgers, 1966), a brilliant interpretation to which I am indebted in my discussion of Appalachia as a social problem. The Southern Appalachians is grouped with the broader "Upland South" in Wilbur Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 118-19, 122-4.

²²311; see also William Goodell Frost, *For the Mountains: An Autobiography* (New York: Revell, 1937), 97; and Drake, "Appalachian America," 6. Berea College has used a modified version of Frost's and Campbell's delineations of the region to define its area of concern; the 1917 Berea College catalog defines the southern mountain region as 265 counties in eight states (not including western Maryland). See Elizabeth S. Peck, *Berea's First Century: 1855-1955* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1955), 79. A 1974 pamphlet of the Office of Admissions lists 230 counties in these eight states as "The Field of Berea." In 1976 Berea College's list was revised and expanded to include 256 counties.

²³Wilson, *The Southern Mountaineers* (New York: Board of Home Missions, 1906; rev. 1914); Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders: A Narrative of Adventure in the Southern Appalachians and a Study of Life Among the Mountaineers* (New York: Outing, 1913; rpt. Macmillan, 1921, rev. 1922, reissued 1926); Raine, *The Land of the Saddle-bags: A Study of the Mountain People of Appalachia* (New York: Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1924).

²⁴(New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921; rpt. Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1969).

²⁵An historical sketch of the Council of the Southern Mountains up through 1973 is given in David E. Whisnant, "Controversy in God's Grand Division: The CSM," *Appalachian Journal*, 2 (Autumn 1974), 7-45. Rebuttals in the form of extended letters to the editor by Loyal Jones, Thomas Parrish, and A.H. Perrin, along with a reply by Whisnant, appear under the title "Problems in Revisionism: More Controversy in God's Grand Division," *Appalachian Journal*, 2 (Spring 1975), 171-91. On the theory of a social problem as a social movement, see the following: Herbert Blumer, "Social Problems as Collective Behavior," *Social Problems*, 18 (Winter 1971), 298-306; John I. Kitsuse and Malcolm Spector, "Toward a Sociology of Social Problems: Social Conditions, Value-Judgements, and Social Problems," *Social Problems*, 20 (Spring 1973), 407-19; Malcolm Spector and John I. Kitsuse, "Social Problems: A Re-Formulation," *Social Problems*, 21 (Fall 1973), 145-59; and Armand L. Mauss, *Social Problems as Social Movements* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975), Chs. 1 and 2, 3-71. Also relevant to the study of the Appalachian social problem movement is John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, *The Trend of Social Movements in America: Professionalization and Resource Mobilization* (Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press, 1973).

²⁶*Southern Highlander*, 12.

²⁷Collins, "Nineteenth Century Fiction," 186; John Fiske, *Old Virginia and Her Neighbours* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1897), II, 177-89. See Campbell's "Appendix B: A Misapplied Theory of Mountain Origin," in *The Southern Highlander* on Fiske.

²⁸Shapiro, "A Strange Land and Peculiar People," 96.

²⁹United States Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 205 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1935), 7-15. Elizabeth R. Hooker of the Institute of Social and Religious Research published an important study of the religious institutions of the region drawing on preliminary data from the USDA survey: *Religion in the Highlands: Native Churches and Missionary Enterprises in the Southern Appalachian Area* (New York: Home Missions Council, 1933). The USDA study also influenced the inclusion of the "Southern Appalachian Coal Plateaus" region in the Study of Population Redistribution supported by the Rockefeller Foundation: Carter Goodrich et al., *Migration and Economic Opportunity* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1936), 54-123. Also from this period see J. Wesley Hatcher, "Appalachian America," in *Culture in the South*, ed. W.T. Couch (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1934), 374-402.

³⁰(Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1936). Nor does Appalachia appear in Howard W. Odum and Harry Estill Moore, *American Regionalism: A Cultural-Historical Approach to National Integration* (New York: Holt, 1938). On the background of TVA, see

Preston J. Hubbard, *Origins of the TVA: The Muscle Shoals Controversy, 1920-1932* (Nashville: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 1961).

³¹Mangus, *Rural Regions of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1940). On the State Social Subregions of the 1940 census, see Donald J. Bogue, Henry S. Shyrock, Jr., and Siegfried A. Hoermann, *Subregional Migration in the United States, 1935-40*, Vol. I, *Streams of Migration*, Scripps Foundation Studies in Population Distribution No. 5 (Oxford, Ohio: Miami Univ., 1957), 26-8. On the State Economic Areas, see Donald J. Bogue and Calvin L. Beale, *Economic Areas of the United States* (New York: Free Press, 1961). My thanks to James S. Brown for these references.

³²Ed. Merrill Jensen (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1951).

³³Ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962). Another publication resulting from the survey is W. D. Weatherford and Earl D.C. Brewer, *Life and Religion in Southern Appalachia* (New York: Friendship Press, 1962). On Weatherford's role in obtaining the Ford Foundation grant, see Wilma Dykeman, *Prophet of Plenty: The First Ninety Years of W.D. Weatherford* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1966), 206-18.

³⁴See also the follow-up study, *Program 60 Report: Action for Progress in Eastern Kentucky in the First Quarter of the 1960 Decade*, Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission, 30 June 1962.

³⁵See Harry W. Ernst, *The Primary That Made a President: West Virginia 1960*, Eagleton Institute Cases in Practical Politics No. 26 (McGraw-Hill, 1962).

³⁶*Appalachia: A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission 1964* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1964).

³⁷Appalachian Regional Commission, *Annual Report 1965*, 3; "Mississippi Joins Appalachia," *Appalachia*, 1 (October 1967), 4-5.

³⁸The first mention of four subregions is in the first issue of *Appalachia*, 1 (September 1967), 3-5. For an expanded version see ARC, *Annual Report 1967*, 7-9; see also the article by the Commission Executive Director, Ralph R. Widner, "The Four Appalachias," *Appalachian Review*, 2 (Winter 1968), 13-19. The scheme is modified in "The New Appalachian Subregions and Their Development Strategies," *Appalachia*, 8 (August-September 1974), 10-16.

³⁹ARC, *1974 Annual Report*, 24-6. One task awaiting radical critics of Appalachian poverty and underdevelopment is the defining of that portion of Appalachia or Central Appalachia that should be considered an internal colony or, alternatively, a peripheral region within an advanced capitalist economy.

⁴⁰This success should not obscure the change in character that has overtaken the movement as some of its goals have been institutionalized in the ARC. The concerns of Frost, the Campbells, and other early advocates of Appalachia as a distinctive social problem region were rooted in a cultural idealism common to American regionalists of the first part of the century. The approach of the ARC is based in an entirely different tradition of technocratic planning. On "the new regionalism," see John Friedmann, "Poor Regions and Poor Nations: Perspectives on the Problem of Appalachia," *Southern Economic Journal*, 32 (April 1966), 465-7. Currently, the movement seems to be fragmented, with the cultural idealists, technocratic planners, and radical critics going separate ways.

⁴¹The idea of "Appalachia" appears to have been grasped opportunistically by most politicians. Some conservatives see the concept as a new strategy of expanding the welfare state and are opposed to all it entails. An amusing expression of this reaction is the following letter to the editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* from Hatler Johnson of Paintsville, Kentucky, printed in the 18 April 1973 issue under the heading "Finds 'Appalachia' Offensive": "During the last eight years the croaking chorus of 'Appalachia' has swamped the people of the region down in the dismal spiritual mire of mind and soul pollution that sickens their

sense of innate self-reliance and morale. The utterance of the million-times repeated word sends out waves of pollution more deadly than strontium 90. The Congress should pass a law that would ban the use of the word from the lexicon, and anyone violating that ban should be liable to a \$10,000 fine and five years in the penitentiary."

⁴²See Thomas R. Ford, "The Passing of Provincialism," Ch. 2 in *The Southern Appalachian Region*.

Appalachian Isolation: Fact or Fiction?

GENE WILHELM, JR.

The inhabitants live in scattered mud-plastered log huts. No one in the hollow proper can read or write. There is no general system of communication between the cabins. There is no road to the outside world. In every direction the perspective is closed by mountain sides covered with ghostly trunks of dead chestnuts. Nearly all the inhabitants are blood relatives.¹

Isolation of the Appalachian mountain folk has not been always the same in kind, degree, time, or space. Isolation in the first part of the initial settlement period began as a physical limitation enforced by distance and rugged terrain. Following the Civil War, however, it changed to social, economic, and psychological isolation, causing people to remain in disadvantaged areas and to resist the changes that would bring them into contact with the outside world. The effect of socioeconomic conditions thus became a new cause of isolation, but the new cause was an attitude and not a mountain range. Still, most writers insist that geographical isolation was (and is) responsible for the destitute socioeconomic status of the mountain folk.² They have presumed that the conditions found in the twentieth century were similar to those of earlier times. This brief report attempts to show otherwise. It redresses the myopic imbalance of long-held views that Appalachian people were always physically isolated. In fact, the Appalachian region has been an admixture of cultural contact and socioeconomic enterprise rather than a bastion of isolated individuals and a slow sequence of economic development as previously depicted in the literature.³

The effects of physiography and climate on the process of settlement in the eastern United States were treated by the geographer Ellen Churchill Semple at the beginning of the twentieth century, not without overemphasis.⁴ The Appalachians, she claimed, were a serious barrier to westward movement while in a later work she qualified that statement by admitting that old, worn-down mountains like the Appalachians were less effective obstacles to settlement and transmontane travel than towering crests like the Rocky Mountains.⁵ Her earlier statement, however, is the one that had the greater effect.

Another famous environmentalist, Ellsworth Huntington, was likewise convinced of the control the mountains had upon the people. He stated:

The mountain environment means poverty, hardship, and isolation for those who cultivate the soil; it has led to a selective process such that certain able types of people

with special talents are not well represented among the mountaineers; it has likewise presumably established a high degree of constitutional vigor among mountaineers, and is probably helping to prevent the best stocks from being eliminated as rapidly as is the case elsewhere. What all this will lead to we cannot say, but it raises the question whether in the end mountaineers may not supply more leaders than will a corresponding number of people from the lowlands.⁶

Huntington failed to recognize that the mountain environment provided a comfortable, satisfying way of life for various socioeconomic classes of mountain folk before the Civil War.⁷ A wide assortment of talented and professional people, from special craftsmen and artists to doctors and lawyers, lived in the mountains since initial settlement.⁸ Indeed, there was a selectivity process involved in initial settlement whereby certain talented individuals purposely chose those mountain sites most conducive to the establishment of a sound trade or profession.⁹ However, Huntington was correct in assuming that generally the health of the mountain folk as a group was probably better and definitely no worse than a comparable rural population sample in the adjoining lowlands.

Semple and Huntington were persuasive writers, and such strong environmental overtones soon were accepted as causes for mountain folk isolation by many novelists and scientific writers alike.¹⁰

The idea that the Appalachian Mountains acted as a physical barrier, either for the people living within the mountain region, or for those individuals trying to cross them, hardly stands up against the evidence at hand. For example, the Blue Ridge Mountains between Front Royal and Waynesboro, Virginia, a distance of seventy-five air miles, contains nearly thirty gaps.¹¹ Even before the coming of the settlers in the eighteenth century, big game mammals like the bison, elk, and deer, Indians, trappers, traders, and explorers utilized over half of these gaps.¹² Once these trails were used by the settlers themselves they quickly evolved into major and minor roads. Thus when the settlers arrived they entered the Blue Ridge Mountains from all directions, penetrating first from the west via the Shenandoah Valley, then from the east, north, and southeast.¹³

Field reconnaissance throughout the Blue Ridge Province of Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia illustrates a similar trail system as well. Amateur and professional archeologists have found many arrow points and other Indian artifacts along countless gap, hollow, and ridge trails. Local residents near many of these trails believe that the trails were originally game trails, later utilized by Indians, trappers, and explorers. Further, all of the families remarked that such trails facilitated movement of the pioneers into the mountain country, regardless of time or place.

Before roads were built across the northern Blue Ridge, narrow trails served as routes of communication on foot or horseback. These usually

followed closely ancient paths traversed for centuries by big game mammals and Indians. In fact, all of the present transverse, modern mountain highways were originally Indian gap-trails (Fig. 1). Because these trails were narrow, the initial settlers gradually widened them for horseback travel and blazed the trees on each side. Because of the narrow configuration of gaps, clearings were ever upward in linear fashion and initial settlement followed this pattern. As the trail system improved, more use was made of it, and larger numbers of people settled along the linear transmontane routes. Thus transverse mountain trails encouraged initial mountain settlement and at the same time promoted improvements in early transportation.

As early as May 1, 1733, Isaac Norman was sent by the County of Spotsylvania to become an overseer of a road to be built across the Piedmont to the Blue Ridge Mountains.¹⁴ In the early 1740's the road was extended across the mountains via Swift Run Gap into the Shenandoah Valley.¹⁵ Soon after, the road became a busy turnpike (toll road), linking the growing Shenandoah Valley communities with the newly created Piedmont settlements and the fall-line communities beyond.

On June 26, 1740, Abram Strickler and others presented a petition to the County of Orange for a public road to run from beyond the Massanutten Mountain (presently the community of New Market) through the New Market Gap and across the Shenandoah Valley to the eastern side of the Blue Ridge Mountains via Thornton Gap.¹⁶ The petition was granted and Abram Strickler and Phillip Long (Lung) were ordered to lay off and supervise the construction of the road, which later became known as the New Market-Sperryville Turnpike (see Fig. 1).¹⁷

During the mid-1740's settlers living in the vicinity of Rockfish Gap petitioned Augusta County to construct a public road through the Blue Ridge connecting Staunton with Richmond and Fredericksburg. On March 18, 1746, David Davis and John Smith were commissioned to lay off a road from the county courthouse to the top of the Blue Ridge near Rockfish Gap (actually Jarmans Gap) and from there to the James River.¹⁸

Although this road later shifted to Rockfish Gap itself, it was not completed for several years. Still the Rockfish Gap region of the northern Blue Ridge Mountains eventually had the greatest concentration of transmontane thoroughfares in the nineteenth century. Two turnpikes, constructed after 1750, branched off from the eastern side of Rockfish Gap. One, known as the Staunton and James River Turnpike, was completed in 1827 and had five tollgates between Staunton and Scottsville. This forty-three-mile-long turnpike gave the farmers of the upper Shenandoah Valley a more direct route to the eastern seaboard and was favored because of its less expensive water route. The second turnpike, called the Rivanna River

TRANSVERSE MOUNTAIN ROADS

MAJOR ROADS AND TURNPIKES CIRCA 1750-1850

1. New Market - Sperryville Turnpike
2. Gordonsville Turnpike
3. Swift Run Turnpike
4. Browns Gap Turnpike
5. Turks Gap Road
6. Jarman Gap Road
7. Rivanna River and Rockfish Gap Turnpike

MINOR ROADS-TRAILS

- A. Ridge Trail
- B. Milam Gap Road
- C. Linkup Trail

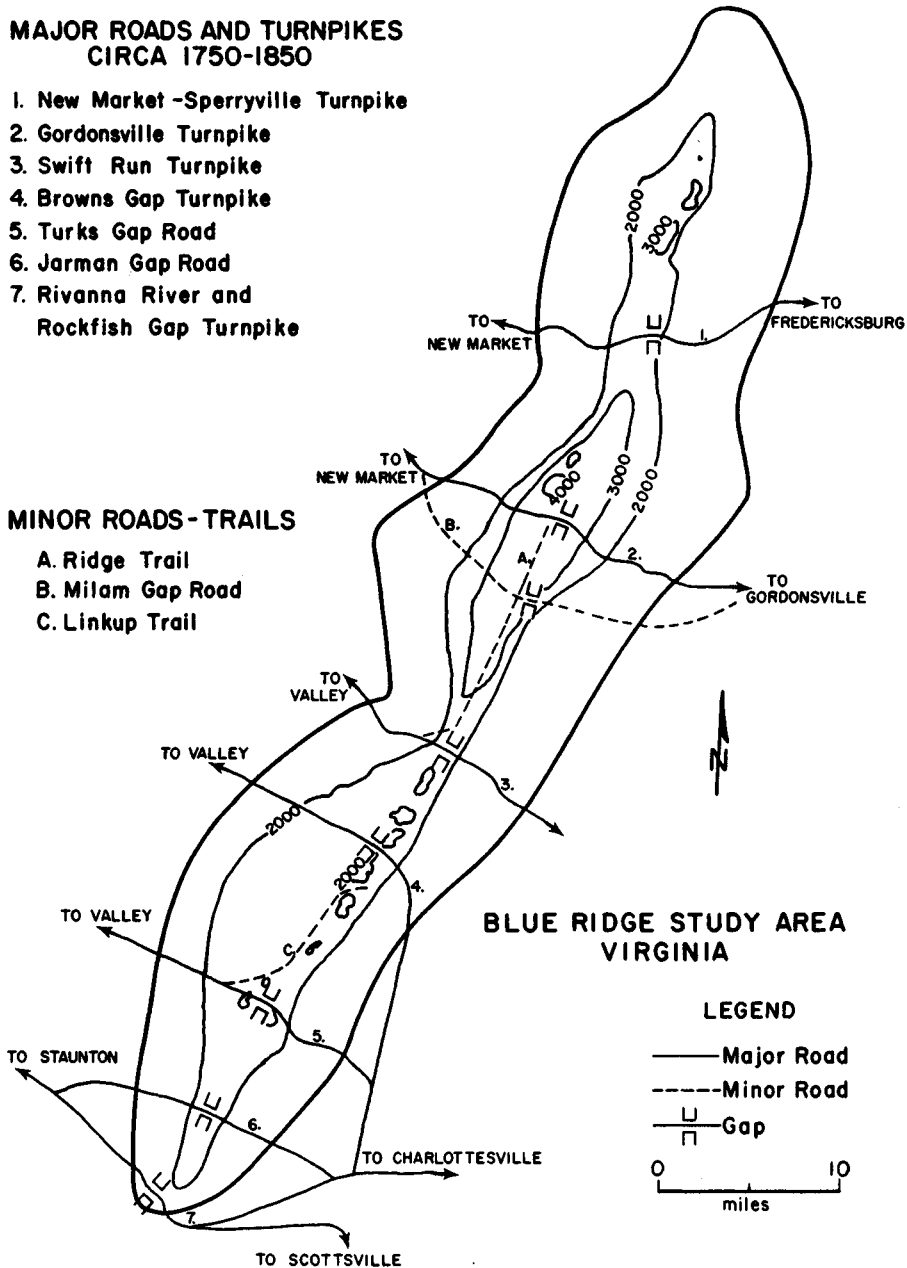


Fig. 1.

FIVE MOUNTAIN HOLLOWS EXTERNAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTACTS 1930 - 1932

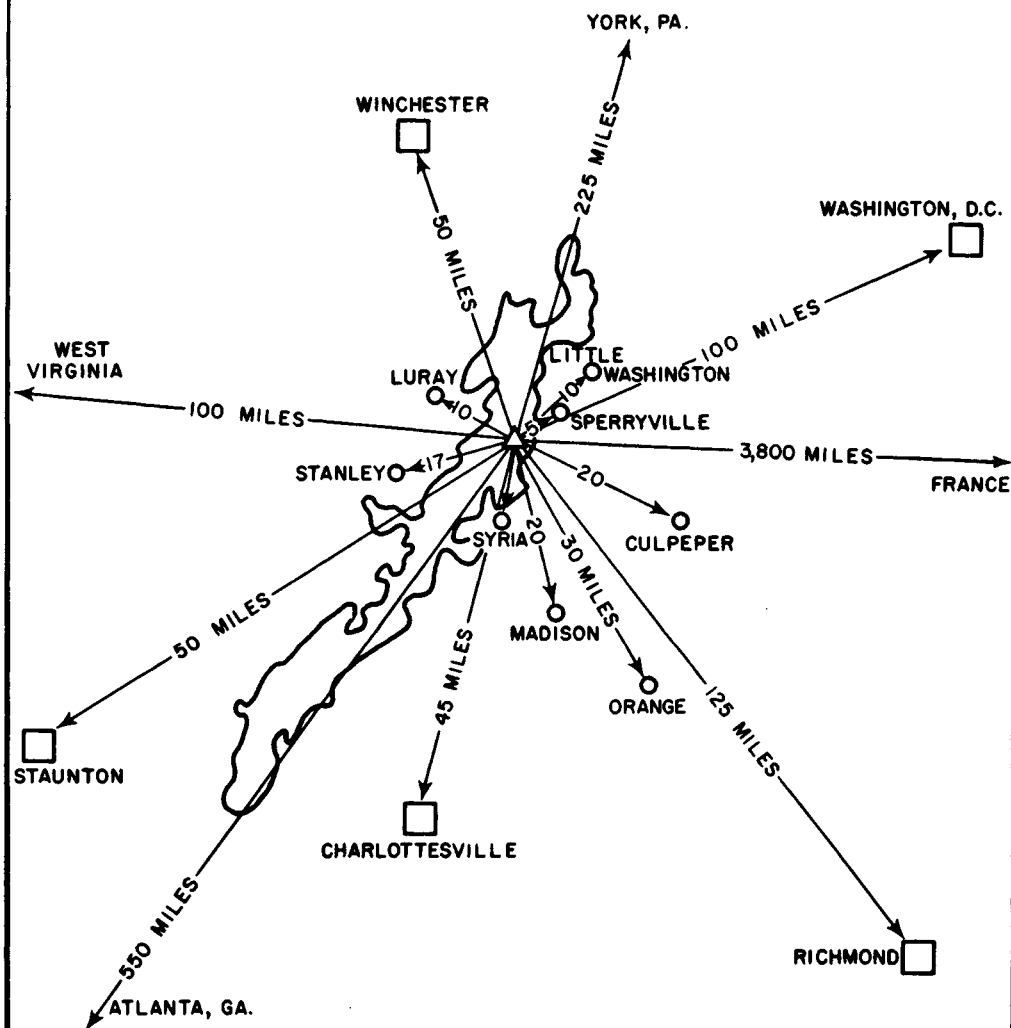


Fig. 2.

and Rockfish Gap Turnpike, followed the Rivanna River east of Charlottesville where the route split into two stagecoach roads. The northern route went to Orange, there turned east, and extended to Fredericksburg. The southern road extended southeast to Palmyra and ended at Columbia on the James River.¹⁹

In the nineteenth century Rockfish Gap became so important commercially that two branches developed in the mountains at Turks Gap and Browns Gap and connected with the Rivanna River and Rockfish Gap Turnpike just east of Rockfish Gap. The southern branch through Turks Gap was a free local mountain road, but the northern branch through Browns Gap extended from the valley near the present community of Grottoes to the present Piedmont district of Whitehall. This latter road soon became a toll road and the name Browns Gap Turnpike was given to it (see Fig. 1).

One final turnpike was constructed in the northern Blue Ridge in the nineteenth century. Called the Blue Ridge Turnpike or the Gordonsville-New Market Turnpike, it was built in 1849-1850 to connect the valley with Madison County on the Piedmont via Fishers Gap just north of Big Meadows. The turnpike, fifty-six miles in length, was not built by the counties it crossed but by a stock enterprise known as the Blue Ridge Turnpike Company. The cost of the road was \$176,000, issued in bonds, a part of which were bought by citizens and a part by the Commonwealth. The road resembled a stone-surfaced macadam typical of the times except that the surface was not as smooth as most. Four tollgates were established on the thirty-two-mile section east of the Blue Ridge crest, and two on the sixteen-mile segment west of Fishers Gap. The company that built the road expected to receive large dividends from tolls, but the tolls (twenty-five cents per team) were too high in comparison with other things of that day. The Commonwealth took control of the turnpike at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and never returned it. The road finally fell into disuse and was abandoned. The amount of tolls collected until 1861 was \$22,659.²⁰

As one can see, this transverse mountain road and turnpike system was responsible for contacts outside the region and for attracting settlers along its busy routes. The Blue Ridge Mountains are not nearly as rugged or high as the Great Smoky or Rocky Mountains. Instead, they are narrow, averaging from four to ten miles across. It would take a healthy person on foot less than a day to hike from one side of the ridge to the other. Crude mountain trails and dirt roads led out of the many hollows to the turnpikes and linear gap settlements. Turnpikes, in turn, connected the entire mountain district with nearby valley and Piedmont communities. Even ridge and meadow settlements, in a relative sense the most "isolated" communities in

the region, had road and trail connections with hollow and gap settlements nearby. The farthest removed settlement, Big Meadows, had almost continuous direct contact with Shenandoah Valley towns during semi-annual stock drives. The distance from Big Meadows to Luray via mountain gap trails, for example, was about twelve miles.

This investigation, therefore, rejects the unreasonable assumption that the mountain folk were completely cut off from the larger, more technologically advanced culture of the surrounding lowlands. The mountain folk culture has never existed in a vacuum as many popular writers have described or assumed it to be. There always have been some travel and communication links with the Shenandoah Valley, Piedmont, and even beyond. There always has been a segment of the mountain population which has had contact with the outside world on a voluntary basis, and there have always been "outsiders" who have visited the mountain people.

Internal (mountain folk) culture carriers have departed from the Blue Ridge Province on seasonal, annual, and irregular bases for decades. Animal drovers are excellent examples of mountain men leaving the region on at least a semi-annual basis to travel not only to adjoining lowland areas but also to distant markets on the fall line.²¹ Seasonal laborers from the mountains, thousands strong, traveled to lowland orchards in spring, summer, and fall to pick the fruit in season. This practice began before the Civil War and continues at present. A mountain man could be employed most of the time from late May to early November picking fruit. Since it was customary to give the fruit pickers their noon meal on the job, many pickers were able to save their wages to take back to their mountain families. Certain mountain men with a trade or craft hired themselves out by the week or by the month. I have encountered carpenters in the Blue Ridge who formerly traveled throughout the fertile Great Valley between Pennsylvania and Tennessee working as temporary builders.²² Often such men would be gone several months of the year, but eventually they would return to their families in the mountains.

Further proof of distant socioeconomic contacts made by the mountain folk near the time of the creation of Shenandoah National Park is indicated by Sizer.²³ These data are the most interesting because they summarize the many socioeconomic contacts made outside of each of five east-side hollows over a three-year period (1930-1932). It is obvious after scanning the data that even the so-called "isolated and primitive" communities, such as Corbin and Dark Hollows, had outside contacts with nearby towns, and, in the case of Corbin Hollow, with far distant cities as well (Table 1).²⁴ An accompanying map shows the location of these towns and cities and their approximate distance from the five hollows (Fig. 2).

It becomes evident in analyzing the previous table that the hollow folk

**Table 1—Five Mountain Hollows: Socioeconomic
Contacts, 1930-1932**

Hollow	No. of Families	Local ¹	Towns ²	Cities ³	Skyland ⁴
Nicholson	32	32	1:32, 2:26, 3:15, 4:21, 7:3	a:9, b:2, c:32, d:1, e:4	32
Corbin	13	13	1:34, 2:10, 4:20, 7:6	a:7, b:8, c:14, f:1	13
Weakley	49	49	1:150, 2:22, 4:15, 5:25	a:34, b:7, c:55, f:5	49
Dark	11	11	4:16, 6:20, 8:2		
Richards	27	27	1:60, 2:55, 4:13, 5:50	a:14, c:13, e:14, g:1, France:1	
TOTAL		132	1-374 2-113 3- 18 4- 54 5- 75 6- 20 7- 9 8- 2	a- 66 b- 17 c-114 d- 1 e- 14 f- 6 g- 1	94

¹Local refers to visits to neighboring communities.

²1:Madison, 2:Culpeper, 3:Sperryville, 4:Luray, 5:Orange, 6:Stanley, 7:Little Washington, 8:Syria.

³a:Charlottesville, b:Washington, D.C., c: Winchester, d:Atlanta, e:Richmond, f:York, Pennsylvania, g: Staunton.

⁴Skyland is a Blue Ridge resort northwest of the hollows.

Source: Sizer

made many outside trips of varying lengths and distances. Corbin Hollow inhabitants, depicted as severely isolated by Sherman and Henry in 1929, made thirty-four visits to Madison, ten visits to Culpeper, twenty to Luray, and six visits to Little Washington. Even more surprising are the longer trips made to Charlottesville (seven), Washington, D. C. (eight), Winchester (fourteen), and one journey to York, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, we do not have the reasons for such visits, although Madison is a county seat and Charlottesville has the best hospital in the region. Winchester is the traditional center for fruit picking, especially apples and peaches.

Dark Hollow, it is noted, fits the description of "isolated" better than Corbin Hollow does. However, even in this tiny settlement of eleven families, outside contacts were made with three towns. Noteworthy is the fact that Dark Hollow was the only settlement to patronize the towns of Stanley and Syria. In both towns I have found the Dark Hollow family name of Cave listed in the telephone directory.

Weakley Hollow, the largest in population and park assessment, accounted for the greatest number of outside visits, Madison being the choicest destination. More male laborers went from Weakley Hollow to Winchester for fruit picking than from the other hollows. Richards Hollow had the distinction of claiming the only trip "across the waters" to France, by far the farthest journey away from the hollow.²⁵ One other inhabitant of Nicholson Hollow made a trip to Atlanta, Georgia, approximately 550 miles away. Unfortunately, we lack comparative data on travel behavior for the adjoining lowlanders during this same period (1930-1932), but it is fair to conclude that the mountain folk traveled more than formerly believed.

External (lowland) culture carriers included town lawyers, doctors, seasonal teachers, tax collectors, circuit preachers, and mailmen. But perhaps the single most important outsider to travel throughout the mountains was the "peddler" or "drummer." Actually there was an economic distinction between these two types of salesmen. Selling the merchandise directly to mountain stores was the task of the drummer. He was the "ear to the ground" for both his house and his city.²⁶ For merchants who were in business at the mouths of hollows and in gaps, drummers served as advisers on such matters as credit, prices, rates of interest, stocks, and lines of goods which would boost trade among the mountain folk. But after the Civil War many mountain people were too poor or reluctant to run up a "high bill" at the local mountain store. Thus it became the task of the peddler to carry a variety of small articles to mountain farmsteads.

Mountain salesmen were of two types: "trunk peddlers" and "wagon peddlers." Trunk peddlers had the most difficult and tiring job, for they walked through the mountains carrying a canvas pack or a light tin trunk

strapped to their backs. This contained

...many small articles of constant household use, such as needles, pins, thread, scissors; also articles that would minister to the immemorial passion of women to enhance their natural charms, such as cheap jewelry, ribbons, lace, and perfume.²⁷

Wagon peddlers were dubbed "tin peddlers" in the Blue Ridge Province because of the large assortment of tinware displayed on the outside of the rickety old wagons. Shining tin teakettles, dippers, pails, cups, pans, and plates rattled the approach of the wagon a mile down the road. Peddlers often bartered their wares for articles of household manufacture, farm produce, or forest products.

News-bearing was a useful and informative service cheerfully rendered by the peddlers, and it was not without compensation. Evening talk around the fireplace was the most subtle kind of salesmanship, which had for its purpose the checking up on the nature of the community, crop projections and prospects, credit risks, and the general taste of mountain customers.²⁸ They were informal business surveys. At the same time a jovial peddler could inform the mountain families about the outside world, tell them about current events, and throw in some new stories for the children besides. The period from 1870 to 1930 was the heyday of the peddler. At a time when most mountain folk had but slight contact with the world beyond the mountains he was a welcome spring and fall visitor and an important local newscaster. The peddler also cut down on the need to travel by the mountain folk, for the "outside world" was brought to their front door.

Isolation, illiteracy, and stupidity are often linked in popular writing as characteristic of the mountain folk. Once again, most writers and field researchers have made broad generalizations based upon specific localized studies in the early twentieth century. Like isolation, literacy and intelligence are relative terms and both have fluctuated in time and space.

Literacy, for example, was common among the initial mountain settlers. There are no statistics, but judging from source materials of all kinds (family Bibles, deed records, petitions, listings of personal possessions), and from the personal comments of descendants of initial settlers, literacy was higher in Appalachia than previously thought. Illiteracy increased with the socioeconomic deterioration of the mountain folk and was tied directly to the folk attitude and value of a formal education. Before the Civil War education was becoming more a "how-to" process, and among the mountain folk the feeling was growing that if a man could make a comfortable living without it, he didn't need schooling.

One proof for continued literacy among the mountain residents is based upon postal service in the Blue Ridge Province. I do not know when the first postal service took place in the region, but the practice was going

strong at least by 1870. This fact is important because it proves that many of the mountain people could read and write. Practically every mountain store had a post office, which suggests a higher literacy rate than previously believed.

Another proof for mountain folk literacy is that many families subscribed to newspapers and periodicals. This startling fact came to my attention while examining old mountain houses in the field. In many hollows and coves I discovered that discarded newspapers were being used to cover the chinking spaces between the logs. Newspapers make good and cheap insulation. A preliminary check with one newspaper, the *Washington Post*, confirmed my suspicions that mountain residents were receiving the newspaper circa 1880 to 1930.²⁹ Customarily mail and newspapers were delivered to strategic points in the mountains, usually general stores at the mouths of hollows and gaps, where the mountain residents would pick them up. Often mail and newspapers were "relayed" up-hollow via relatives and neighbors.

All of these examples point to some other cause(s) for the stereotyped cliché of geographically isolated, backward, and ignorant mountain folk so commonly depicted together in literature and cartoons (e.g., *Li'l Abner*). Isolation must be employed in the folk sense; that is, the folk group looks inward upon itself, thereby creating its own limited world. The mountain folk way of life is executed in terms of the group, in relation to each member of the unit, and the group cares less about happenings outside its own domain than those inside it. Cultural reasons, rather than physiography and climate, kept the mountain folk out of the fast-flowing mainstream of American civilization. Moreover, the cultural isolation of the mountain folk is recent in time, stemming from the Civil War period.

The period of peak economic prosperity in the Blue Ridge Province, 1790 to 1860, was also a time of regional changes in the adjoining lowlands. These changes eventually were destined to shatter the comfortable mountain way of life. The first few decades of the nineteenth century saw a consolidation of the regional trends as exemplified in the Shenandoah Valley: an expanded settlement in the southern and western parts, greater diversification and mechanization of agricultural production, and a steady growth of the main towns and transportation nets connecting with other regions of the Commonwealth.

The evidence seems indisputable that the majority of mountain dwellers enjoyed a good standard of living, comparatively speaking, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The mountain farmstead was adapted to family agriculture. Ordinarily those farms which were most successful were of such size that the farmer and his family could do most, if not all, of the work required. The products of the soil, combined with a

small amount of cash derived from snaking logs and carrying hand-split shingles to the local sawmill, taking chestnuts, dried fruit, apple butter, and distilled liquor to nearby hollow and gap stores, afforded a reasonable existence. Nearly all necessary services and items beyond the capabilities of household industries and crafts were procured by the surplus production of farm and forest products. For example, one-eighth of the corn crop went to the miller for grinding; the tanner claimed half the hide for tanning; and six bushels of apples fetched a gallon of apple brandy at the distillery. In this relatively simple set of economic relationships, the margin of well-being seems to have been secured by the skill and energy with which the mountain family practiced the domestic industries and crafts that were common to all of rural Appalachia in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It has been estimated that the mountain farmer, by making the most of his garden, orchard, poultry, milk cow, hogs, bees, and sorghum patch, produced up to ninety percent of his living before the Civil War, and a mighty good living at that.

The Civil War marked the beginning of a cultural isolation and a cultural lag on the part of the mountain folk. Socioeconomic changes after the War—such as the introduction of the portable sawmill and the rapid depletion of the mountain forests; the coming of the railroads to the lowlands and the bypassing of the highlands; the severe decline in Blue Ridge turnpike trade and commerce; the introduction of the chemical process of tanning and development of large-scale textile processes in the Shenandoah Valley; the disappearance of wild game and the chestnut in the mountains; and, finally, industrialization and new urban growth on the Piedmont and in the Shenandoah Valley—created the cultural isolation and widened the lag. One result of this isolation was the perpetuation of a folk culture based in large part upon traditions, values, and attitudes that existed when the area was first settled in the eighteenth century.

The mountain folk were never separated from the larger, industrialized, mostly urban society beyond the mouth of the hollow except by choice. But they were never really a part of that larger society either. Continuous cultural contact between the mountain folk and the lowlanders was carried out by internal and external cultural carriers. The former group was predominantly male mountain laborers, consisting of drovers, fruit pickers, and handymen who traveled to lowland communities for days, weeks, or months each year. These male mountaineers always returned to the Blue Ridge Province and brought with them new ideas, new techniques for doing things, and new items of material culture from the industrialized society. These things were sifted, discarded, or accepted by the group.

For example, candles gradually gave way to kerosene lamps; wooden utensils were replaced by tin ones; and linen garments were discarded for

bought or traded woolen and cotton cloth. If the large and far-reaching number of outside contacts depicted by the five hollows in this report over a three-year period is a fair representation of the entire Appalachian region, and preliminary field reconnaissance in North Carolina, West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia indicates that it is, then geographical isolation for the mountain folk is a myth.

Granted, there were, and are today, mountain communities with distinctly more or less economic affluence and with more or less accessibility to the adjoining lowlands. But even those communities that are economically destitute or the least accessible have continuous contact with their own and neighboring membership and have some form of outlet to the adjoining lowlands. Nowhere in the Blue Ridge Province is a mountain community farther than ten miles from a lowland town or community, and all are connected by roads. In most cases general stores are much closer. The mountain folk have always made contact with the outside world on a voluntary basis and they continue to do so. If they were not "of the world" it is not because they were ignorant of the outside ways of life, but because they had seen it, reflected upon it, and almost totally rejected it. The mountain folk could adjust to the situation of cultural isolation because they could rather easily do so in their mountain setting.

External culture carriers likewise brought new ideas and new materials to the mountain folk. Circuit preachers, teachers, tax collectors, doctors, lawyers, mailmen, and peddlers were gradually accepted and trusted by the mountain people. Again, if the "new" fitted the culture pattern, it was accepted; if not, it was discarded.

The persistence of traditional folk practices and beliefs is remarkable when those practices and beliefs are, in truth, outmoded. Thus modern medicine, formal education, and scientific agriculture had a difficult time making inroads in Appalachia. But eventually the mountain folk were helpless in preventing such changes to reach the mountains. Change from the outside came in the form of public education in the late nineteenth century and in the form of public works in the 1920's and 1930's. The creation of national forests, national parks, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Youth Administration oriented the mountain people to the money economy and increased their material wants. Mail order catalogs, newspapers, and farm journals found their way into the homes of even the most culturally isolated. These forms of mass media have been somewhat neglected by researchers, but surely they helped to arouse curiosity and a taste for the new. Finally rural electrification and the radio found their way into the mountains and were quickly accepted. Their late arrival in the 1930's cannot be blamed on the mountain people's refusal to accept them, but upon regional, state, and national neglect of the

mountain region until that time. In any event, the transition was not marked by any radical reorientation of values but rather by a gradual shifting of beliefs and sentiments.

Possibly the greatest single attribute of mountain folk culture is its ability to survive, but almost always with an awareness of the wider world beyond. Life has meaning in the mountains and there is an order to the mountain folk world view. This order includes elements of man, nature, and supernature. Elements of nature and elements conceived as existing and meaningful, though perhaps unseen and nonmaterial, are so composed as to document and justify the traditional course of life.

NOTES

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¹Mandel Sherman and Thomas Henry, *Hollow Folk* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1933), 5.

²Muriel E. Sheppard, *Cabins in the Laurel* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1935), 69.

³Arguments on this issue are found in Thomas R. Ford, ed., *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962).

⁴Ellen Churchill Semple, *American History and Its Geographic Conditions* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1903).

⁵Ellen Churchill Semple, "The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains: A Study of Anthropogeography," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, 42 (1910), 1-34; and *Influences of Geographic Environment* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1911), 521.

⁶Ellsworth Huntington, "A Geographer's Idea of Mountaineers," *Mountain Life & Work*, 4 (1928), 2.

⁷Gene Wilhelm, Jr., "Folk Culture History of the Blue Ridge Mountains," *Appalachian Journal*, 2 (Spring 1975), 210-11.

⁸*Ibid.*, Table 1, 211.

⁹*Ibid.*, 211.

¹⁰See especially the many references in standard bibliographies about Appalachia; Everett Edwards, *References on the Mountaineers of the Southern Appalachians* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1935); and Robert F. Munn, *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies* (Morgantown: West Virginia Univ. Library, 1961).

¹¹Wilhelm, "Folk Culture History," 214.

¹²*Ibid.*, 199-200.

¹³*Ibid.*, 214-15.

¹⁴Charles E. Kemper, "The Early Westward Movement of Virginia, 1722-1734," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 13 (1906), 366.

¹⁵Rapid progress in road construction is indicated by an Augusta County order for

William Pierce and Adam Miller to inspect a new road from the top of the Blue Ridge at the head of Swift Run down to Captain Down's Place. The date of this order was February 11, 1745. See Lyman Chalkley, ed., *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlements in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800* (Rosslyn: Commonwealth Printing Co., 1912), 14, 24.

¹⁶Harry M. Strickler, *Massanutten Settled by the Pennsylvania Pilgrim 1726* (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1924), 9.

¹⁷The policy of placing responsibility for building and maintaining the Thornton Gap road on the county government resulted in a desperately poor highway. At some times of the year it was practically impassable. Few streams were bridged; fords were difficult and often dangerous to cross. Rails were piled by the roadsides for use in prying wagons out of the mud. Not infrequently drivers took down fences and made new routes across fields.

¹⁸Strickler, *Massanutten*, 27.

¹⁹Virginia Moore, *Scottsville on the James: An Informal History* (Charlottesville, Va: Jarman Press, 1969), 56.

²⁰C.L. Yowell, *A History of Madison County, Virginia* (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1926), 113.

²¹Eugene J. Wilhelm, Jr., "Animal Drives: A Case Study in Historical Geography," *Journal of Geography*, 66 (1967), 327-34.

²²Particularly Harrison Caudill of Wilkes County, North Carolina. Harrison sometimes would be away from home for a year at a time, but he would always return with substantial savings.

²³Miriam M. Sizer, "Tabulations: Five Mountain Hollows," *A Report by the National Park Service* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1933).

²⁴Corbin Hollow is singled out in this report because both Sherman and Henry and Sizer visited the community only a few months apart. Data collected by Sizer conflict to some degree with Sherman and Henry's data. Since the field objectives were different for both studies, there is understandably room for some discrepancy. However, the data collected by the National Park Service conclusively show that Corbin Hollow had a higher level of socioeconomic and material culture development than that reported in *Hollow Folk*. The park data also presented significant proof that the "isolation" mentioned by Sherman and Henry was more cultural than physical, as previously illustrated in this report by the number of outside socioeconomic contacts made by the hollow folk. I can only conclude with the evidence at hand that *Hollow Folk* was a somewhat distorted, in places even a false, scientific interpretation of the mountain folk culture.

²⁵There may be a correlation between far reaching journeys away from Richards Hollow and the amount of affluence obtained by operating thirteen moonshine stills there. At first glance Richards Hollow might seem like a den of iniquity, but interviews with several descendants of the area revealed that less than one-fourth of all "white lightning" made in the hollow was consumed there. Most was exported via the latest model vehicles to markets outside the Blue Ridge.

²⁶Thomas D. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 84-97.

²⁷Stevenson W. Fletcher, *Pennsylvania Agriculture and Country Life, 1640-1840* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1950), 385.

²⁸I was told by mountain folk that until World War II peddlers were commonly Jews and Lebanese from houses in Richmond, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

²⁹Rural newspaper and mail routes are two aspects of historical geography that deserve far more professional attention; both can be valuable clues in reconstructing past culture histories.

Appalachians and Non-Appalachians: The Common Bond

ROBERT PAUL SESSIONS

Those mountaineers! What a strange people! How singular, distinctive, peculiar, and quaint! An odd folk, in the sense attached to an odd shoe for which no matching shoe can be found.

Numerous books and articles have been written to examine and to describe how different the mountaineer is from other Americans—in ancestry, life circumstances, life style, family orientation, vocabulary, dialect, values, beliefs, attitudes, racial and body stocks, religion, dress, work habits—in fact, in virtually every aspect of living and of culture. In particular, those mountaineers who live in Central and Southern Appalachia have been seen by many as “a people apart,”¹ living in “a region apart.”² They are “yesterday’s people,”³ dwelling “where time stood still.”⁴

The mountaineer has been caricatured in comic strips and laughed at in television programs. Some writers have seen the mountaineer in even a more negative light. The classic example of such authors may be the noted British historian Arnold J. Toynbee, who in 1935 described the people of Appalachia as feuding, illiterate, and superstitious, as living in poverty, squalor, and ill-health, and as “no better than barbarians.”⁵ Other writers would insist that if mountaineers are savages, at least they are noble savages. Still others see the uniqueness of mountain people as positive and worthy of preserving,⁶ and some authors romanticize and idolize the mountaineer as the last representative and defender of Early American (or Old World) values.⁷ While much writing on Appalachia has been normative, openly positive or negative in judging the mountaineer, some scholars have attempted objective studies of the distinctiveness of mountain people—focusing on such traits as individualism, family and personal orientation, fatalism, and patriotism.

A number of writers have tried not only to describe but to explain the uniqueness of mountain people, to help us understand why the mountain man and mountain woman are as they are, or why mountain children are as they are. Jack Weller takes this direction for his best-known work: “We stand before the mountaineer, utterly baffled by his peculiarities. Why isn’t he like us?”⁸

I am confident that several of the papers prepared for this symposium will, and rightly so, stress some of the ways the mountaineer is unique. At both the scholarly and the gut level, there are a number of reasons why we emphasize the uniqueness of the mountaineer. Some of our reasons are ambivalent. We underline the unusual character of mountain living partly because we are repelled by certain elements in mountain life. Many sections of Appalachia still are characterized by such things as economic deprivation, environmental deterioration and exploitation, a waste of human resources, high unemployment, deficits in education, poor living standards, inadequate housing, high percentages of the residents on welfare, selective out-migration reflecting insufficient job opportunities for the talented and well-trained, an inadequate tax base, and a low proportion of local ownership and capital.⁹

According to the 1970 census, the per capita income in Southern Appalachia was only 76 percent of the nation as a whole (\$3,530 in Southern Appalachia compared to the U. S. average of \$4,490). One out of five residents of Southern Appalachia (21 percent) had family incomes below the poverty level in 1970 (compared to 14 percent nationwide). In 1970 and, again, compared to the rest of the United States, much of the housing in Southern Appalachia (21.8 percent) was substandard. And compared to the nation at large, the Appalachian region had higher incidences of infant mortality and of preventable chronic diseases and disabilities.¹⁰

There is no law which prevents town and city dwellers from leaving the jobs and conveniences of urban living and moving to the mountains. But, perhaps because of the negative elements associated with mountain living, we choose to stay where we are. Yet mountaineers, many or most of them, choose to live in the mountains. So we say of the mountain folk, "they're different."

But there is another, more positive reason why we stress the uniqueness of mountain people. We love or admire many qualities in their lives which we lack. Some of those writers who have most accurately captured the distinctiveness of language, of attitude, and of action of the mountaineer have themselves come through their studies to new appreciations of their subject. They come to think and to write about the mountaineer not only with their head, but with their heart. Ethnocentrism—the feeling that "my group is better than others"—is found not only among members of a group (such as a mountain community) but often also among those who study and write about such groups. It is common for students of Appalachia to find in the mountaineer at his best a sort of folk hero who embodies many of the traits cherished and only sometimes realized by the rest of us Americans. So we say of mountain people, "they're different."

We are both attracted to and repelled by the mountaineer. We may

praise, respect, and try to understand him, but we ourselves choose not to live as he lives. He may appear to be poverty-stricken in material things yet rich in the natural beauty of his surroundings. He may be both apathetic and resourceful, both illiterate and ingenious. The economist Kenneth Boulding has written that the strength of attraction of a symbol may be proportional to the ambivalence we feel toward the symbol.¹¹ "Mother," for example, represents love and hot biscuits but also authority and spankings. Our nation's flag stands not only for national identity and pride but for taxation and the power to conscript for military service. It may well be that the ambivalence we feel toward "the mountaineer" strengthens our tendency to attach to the mountaineer a symbolic character which is seen as quite unlike our own natures.¹²

There may be differences among academic disciplines in the degrees of uniqueness found in the mountaineer. For example (and although there are exceptions), historians tend to look for, to study, and to stress the unusual in their subjects. Sociologists, on the other hand, tend to stress those qualities and experiences which are common to all people. As a sociologist and as both a student and lover of the mountains, I know that there are many unique qualities about mountain life and numerous characteristics which set the mountaineer off from other Americans. I recognize that these differences are interesting, important, and worth studying. But I would urge that while we study and respect the uniqueness of mountaineers, we ought not neglect the other side of the coin—the extent to which they are "us."

Let me suggest two ways in which there can be seen a common bond between mountaineers and non-mountaineers and, in particular, between Appalachians and non-Appalachians. First, some of us have known a similar culture outside Appalachia. Some of us who now live in city houses with electric lights, central heat, and flush toilets have, in earlier days and in other places, cleaned the soot from the mantles of kerosene lanterns, cut wood for a wood-burning stove, and sat in a one- or two-hole outhouse on a cold winter's day. Even if we ourselves did not know those things, many of us are aware that our parents or grandparents or great-grandparents knew them. So when we talk about the mountaineer and his kerosene lantern, wood-burning stove, and outhouse, we are talking about ourselves, about us.

But there is a second and probably more basic and more important way in which the common bond between mountaineers and non-mountaineers can be seen. Beneath the more obvious differences in such things as dress, dialect, and housing, there are fundamental human traits and problems which all persons, all families, all regions, and all cultures have in com-

mon. In the mountains and on valley farms, in prairie communities and in small river towns, in inner cities and in suburbs, there are common elements. Certain similar emotions, experiences, and attachments cluster around family life. Primary groups are formed and, with the passage of time, change. The lifelong process of socialization helps persons to become social beings and to know the possibilities and the restrictions of life in their societies. Cultures, values, and life styles are passed from one generation to the next and, in the passing, altered. Leaders emerge. Conflict arises and is dealt with, sometimes creatively and at other times destructively. Love, anger, joy, sorrow, hope, despair, courage, and pity are experienced and expressed.

One clear demonstration that the basic experiences in the lives of mountain people are, at heart, like the basic experiences of non-mountaineers can be found in the songs mountain people sing—both the folk songs which are native to the mountains and the hundreds of English folk songs which followed the settlers into the Appalachians. Although the native songs often have local settings, they are songs about such fundamental themes as jobs (“Thirty-inch Coal”), loneliness (“The Coming of the Roads”), sickness (“Black Lung Blues”), the mountains (“Oh, the Green Rolling Hills of West Virginia”), the joy of being in nature’s out-of-doors (“Mountain Stream”), and hope for the future (“New Day Comin’ ”).¹³

The imported and often-modified English folk songs, preserved by the Appalachians because the songs have meaning for them, also deal with subjects important to people everywhere—religion, the joy of young love, the pain of farewell, anguish at death, anger at being deceived, and satisfaction at justice being done. They include also jig tunes and game songs, nonsense songs and children’s songs.¹⁴ One of the reasons why the songs of mountain people deal with the same subjects as the songs of other people is that mountain folk are much like other folk. They care. They share. They dream. They hurt. Like humans everywhere, the people of Appalachia search for self-concepts and for personal identity, for meaning, and for significance.

Still another indication of both the uniqueness and the normality of mountain people can be seen in their language and dialect. Scholars have pointed out that there are a number of differences between the dialects of Appalachian mountaineers and other Americans. But scholars also have noted (and I discovered for myself in moving from central West Virginia to eastern Tennessee) that there are dialect differences among the mountaineers of Appalachia themselves. They cannot even agree on how to pronounce Appalachia! And many of the pronunciations once thought to be peculiar to the Appalachians now are known to be common in certain other areas of the country. Many ways of saying words in Southern Ap-

palachia are quite similar to those I encountered as a boy growing up in the Ozark mountains of northcentral Arkansas—words like *afeared*, *peert*, *biled*, *sich*, *fer*, *haint*, and *hep*.

Still another way of seeing how much “like us” mountaineers are, and how much like mountain folk we are, is to get to know and to compare the thoughts, the values, and the life styles of a number of particular mountaineers. Some of them are liberal, some are conservative, and others are radical. Some are likeable, others are detestable. Some are religious and others quite irreligious. Some are teetotalers, others are alcoholics, and others are somewhere in between. Some enjoy modest wealth and others endure abject poverty. Some like turnips and others “turn up their noses at turnips.” The mountaineer caricature neglects the wide differences among individual mountaineers. It is as much an error to say that “all mountaineers are alike” as it is to say that “all blacks (or all whites, or all city-dwellers, or all farmers, or all Americans) are alike.” Yet the minute we start to break down our stereotypes, at that instant we are forced to begin acknowledging that in many ways the mountaineer is not different from us, but much like us and in fact one of us.

Even the things about the mountaineer which repel us often are a part of us—a part we might like to avoid or to forget. Some of us have known substandard housing, or inadequate schools, or isolation, or apathy. Appalachia has no monopoly on environmental deterioration and exploitation, on ignorance, superstition, and sectarian religion, or on welfare-dependent families. An old man or woman sitting on a city park bench, or an owner of an outmoded, small neighborhood store, or even many a middle-class American past middle age can share with the isolated mountaineer the feeling of being passed by—by time, by the world, or by success. Many of the negative aspects of mountain life are found, at least to a degree, in other parts of the country as well.

But especially in those qualities which draw us to the mountaineer and to his mountains do we find the reflected image of ourselves. Let me briefly list a few of the traits often ascribed to the uniqueness of the Appalachian, but which many outside Appalachia also know, or aspire to, at least in part:

(1) *Love of the land and of nature.* This quality is not confined to the mountains. A Kansas farmer can know it. And at least a taste of it can be experienced by an urbanite who walks with sensitivity through a city park, or who holds a flower in his hand. We may envy the mountaineer his closeness to nature, but we also can feel some of that closeness ourselves.

(2) *Appreciation of, feeling for, and commitment to primary relationships.* Devotion to family and to friends, a strong identity with and attachment to one's neighborhood groups, and hospitality in close personal relationships

are found outside as well as in the mountains.

(3) *Knowing how to get by with a little.* Unemployed persons in run-down ghetto apartments, tenant farmworkers in shanties on someone else's Southern farm, and retired couples whose tiny pension check is threatened by inflation, all these experience some of the same struggle for survival and the need for resourcefulness which are characteristic of many isolated mountaineers.

(4) *Holding onto or getting back to basics.* Some writers, and perhaps many other Americans, have seen the mountaineer as a symbol of an unchanging way of life in the midst of a rapidly-changing world. Yet the ability to maintain some sense of simplicity in a complex world, and to know what things really are important beneath or behind the glitter of modern living, would be claimed as a value by many persons. For some this might require "getting back" to basics. Since many mountaineers have never let go of the basics, for them it is a matter of "holding on." But numerous ones among us can identify with the mountaineer in this desire.

(5) *Tragic greatness in struggling against prohibitive odds.* Surely there is a kinship among those, outside as well as inside Appalachia, who have known hopeless circumstances yet continued to do their best—who have known what it is to try against virtually impossible circumstances, and fail, and try again. And fail again. And try again!

(6) *The grace of believing.* Many a mountaineer, despite hardships and failures and heartbreak, has, in Cratis Williams' words, "believed with all his heart and all his mind and all his soul." Since mountains are among the most enduring things in the world, and are for many a symbol of eternity,¹⁵ and since the five-hundred-million-year-old Appalachians are among the world's oldest mountains, perhaps the Appalachian settlers and their descendants have had an advantage over others in developing a solid, uplifting faith which sees above and beyond temporary troubles. Yet history and literature are filled with examples of persons who have achieved such a faith in difficult, if not impossible, situations outside Appalachia and for that matter outside mountain regions.

We could name other positive qualities said to be unique to the mountaineer, yet qualities to which many of us can lay at least a small claim. The mountaineer's devotion to country and to individual freedom. The mountaineer's modesty and sense of humor. But we have given enough examples to make clear that many of those traits for which mountain people are praised, as well as those for which mountain folk are criticized, are characteristics which also are found in the rest of us Americans—at least enough so that we can feel a kinship of common experience and common dreams with the mountaineer.

Understanding the Appalachian mountaineer requires attention to both

the similarities and the dissimilarities between them and other Americans. Looking from one focus, the one stressing the Appalachian's uniqueness, one can say that although mountain people face the same basic realities of life as do other people, they face them under different circumstances and in different ways. Placing the emphasis in the other direction, one can point out that although mountain people live under conditions and in ways which are in many respects different from other Americans, they come to grips with the same fundamental issues of living as do the rest of us.

Perhaps as much as any other scholar, Cratis Williams has studied and recorded many distinctive qualities of the mountaineer. But he also notes that a universal identity, a common tie with all people, is as characteristic of mountain folk as is their uniqueness. After pointing out that most Appalachian residents are valley farmers or city dwellers, Williams says that even those mountaineers most like the stereotype—those who live in the most inaccessible areas of the mountain region—"do not think of themselves as mountaineers...they are just people."¹⁶

Our appreciation of the mountaineer is not decreased, but rather increased, because we can to a great extent identify with the mountaineer. The academic study of mountain life is not hurt but helped by the realization of how much of ourselves can be found in the mountain people. Certainly the scholarship of Cratis Williams in this area has not suffered because of his having both come out of and remained a part of the mountain culture.

More and more people are coming into Appalachia—many to visit, some to stay. Already the Blue Ridge Parkway and the parks it touches comprise the most popular area administered by the Park Service. And although from 1966 to 1970 Appalachia experienced a net out-migration of 345,000 persons, it had from 1970 to 1973 a net in-migration of 254,000. From 1970 to 1973 the average growth rate of population in both Central and Southern Appalachia exceeded the population growth rate of the nation as a whole.¹⁷

This increase in population in Appalachia, at least in parts of it, is likely to continue, for the region has many highly desirable assets: varied and abundant forests, natural beauty, a strategic location, abundant water, labor reserves, electricity potential, mineral resources, and relatively uncongested land space.¹⁸ New highways and a rising population will bring more and more other Americans into contact with mountain people. Perhaps then the stereotypes will break down, and America will find that mountaineers are, after all, much the same as all other human beings.

Even now, if we are perceptive, we know that in the mountaineer, in a profound sense, we find ourselves writ both small and large. It seems fitting, therefore, to end this paper with the words of John Muir with which

Frome began his natural and human history of the Great Smoky Mountains, *Strangers in High Places*:

The mountains are fountains, not only of rivers and fertile soil, but of men. Therefore, shall we feel (as Muir did) that in some sense we are all mountaineers, and going to the mountains is going home?¹⁹

NOTES

¹R.C. Langman, *Appalachian Kentucky: An Exploited Region* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1971), 47.

²Appalachian Regional Commission, *Appalachia: A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission 1964* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1964), xv.

³Jack Weller, *Yesterday's People* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962).

⁴Bruce and Nancy Roberts, *Where Time Stood Still: A Portrait of Appalachia* (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1970).

⁵Originally in Toynbee's *The Study of History*, this treatment of Appalachia has been reprinted and cited in numerous works, the latest being Robert J. Higgs and Ambrose N. Manning, eds., *Voices from the Hills: Selected Readings of Southern Appalachia* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1975), 383-8. This book was co-published with the Appalachian Consortium Press, Boone.

⁶Cf. Jim Wayne Miller, "A Mirror for Appalachia," in Higgs and Manning, *Voices from the Hills*, 447-59.

⁷Cf. Loyal Jones, "Appalachian Values," *Twigs*, 10 (Fall 1973), 82-94.

⁸Jack Weller, *Yesterday's People*, 2.

⁹ARC, *Appalachia: A Report 1964*, 1-18.

¹⁰Appalachian Regional Commission, *1974 Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1974), 19-21, 26, 43, 53-4.

¹¹This idea is developed in Boulding's *Conflict and Defense* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

¹²If space permitted, the ambivalence which attaches to the symbolic character of the mountaineer could be illustrated by examples from American humor. Disdain, appreciation, disgust, and envy, all are directed at the mountaineer.

¹³Cf. Guy and Candie Carawan, eds., *Voices from the Mountains* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975).

¹⁴Cecil Sharp and Dorothy Karpeles, *Eighty English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1968).

¹⁵One of the best statements of this idea is by M. Brooks: "The hills are our symbols of eternity. There they stand, the evidence of things seen, as nearly everlasting and unchangeable as anything man may know" (*The Appalachians* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965], 328).

¹⁶Cratis Williams, "Who Are the Southern Mountaineers?" *Appalachian Journal*, 1 (Autumn 1972), 54.

¹⁷ARC, *1974 Annual Report*, 14-15.

¹⁸Harry M. Caudill, "Jaded Old Land of Bright New Promise," in David S. Walls and John B. Stephenson, eds., *Appalachia in the Sixties: Decade of Reawakening* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1972), 240-6.

¹⁹Michael Frome, *Strangers in High Places* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), v.

The Appalachian Personality

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Assisting Appalachian Families

DAVID H. LOOFF, M.D.

Ultimately, in Appalachia as anywhere else, it is people that make the area important. It is the people of the Southern mountains, in their region or in the places to which they migrate, who are the makers and carriers of their society and culture. They are the ones, primarily, who train the rising generation of their children and live their lives in either satisfyingly productive or bleakly nonproductive ways. Thus, although many agencies, bureaus, and departments of the federal government and the various state governments are rightfully concerned with natural resource development in Appalachia, with the building of new roads and schools, and with ways of fostering regional industrial growth, these concerns must not become the central ones. Rather, they must be viewed as they offer opportunities for people and as they affect the growth and development of children.

When we consider the difficulties of the people of Appalachia, whether in the mountains or in the cities, it is the manifold problems of the very poor that are the most vexing. The stable working class (although they are generally poor by federal income standards), the middle, and the upper classes in the region generally succeed remarkably well in providing for their health, education, and welfare. The most important developmental force accounting for this success is regional familism—close, interdependent family functioning, of which the most obvious expression is the extensive kinship system in the mountains. By ensuring that even limited resources will be shared among the extended family, particularly at times of crisis, familism stabilizes family life, structure, and functioning. This positive side of familism provides a steady state even for the very poor families. In this respect the Appalachian very poor, unlike the often socially disorganized families raised in urban slums, possess a strength that can be tapped for redirection of their lives in many areas.¹ But one nevertheless encounters real problems in attempting to reach the Appalachian very poor with various health, education, and welfare service programs.

At the present time, as well as in the past, any number of professionals from a variety of public and private health care, education, welfare, and vocational agencies have sought to bring their services to needy Appalachian people, whether these people be poor families who continue to live in the region or those who have migrated to urban ghettos. In their attempts to bring their expertise to bear on a particular area of a stricken

family's lifestyle, these outside professionals have frequently found apathy and resistance within the family itself. The sorely needed service or aid has not been accepted in any real sense. More often the service, a welfare check, for example, has been silently taken and later, perhaps, not used for what appear to us as their greatest needs. Nothing really has been exchanged in the transaction except a sum generally inadequate to meet the family's needs for clothing, food, and shelter.

The paradigm holds true in the health care field. The living conditions of the very poor in Appalachia, their apathy (a form of chronic depression), and the meagerness of resources have often forced medical care into inadequate, symptomatic, crisis-oriented patterns. Nothing has occurred in these encounters of failure (for that is what these abortive attempts to give and receive some sort of aid really are) because people's lives have not been touched. The helping professional feels rebuffed, unwanted, and unfulfilled as a helper. The potential recipient of the full measure of his aid, the Appalachian person in need, comes away from such an encounter feeling equally misunderstood and further rejected.

Thomas Ford points up several aspects of this barrier of resistance between the helping person and the family of the Appalachian lower class:

It is extremely difficult for "outside" agencies to reach these [Appalachian] families that most need their help. Community institutions, it has been noted, are not traditional mechanisms for handling "personal" problems in Appalachia. Numerous studies have documented that poor families do not participate much in community organizations of any type, including the church. And, because the personnel of these institutions are themselves often strangers, they frequently generate ever greater insecurities on the part of those they are trying to serve. We have rather dramatic evidence of how traumatic a new experience can be to Appalachian children, especially when it must be faced apart from the family. The exaggerated fear of the unfamiliar institution is not confined to children. Stories abound of the very real apprehension and anxiety of adults forced by circumstances to utilize the services of an unfamiliar organization such as a hospital or a government agency office.²

The characteristic lifestyle of the person in the Appalachian lower class, with its trained-in individualism, traditionalism, religious fatalism, action-orientation, and stoicism in manner and speech,³ works toward an inner-directedness that cuts the person off from community institutions and from cooperating participation with a stranger in meeting, defining, and attempting to solve his problems.

This failure of many of our community institutions to reach the Appalachian poor was painfully demonstrated for the writer years ago in both the general health care and the mental health field. In the late 1950's, and again in the early 1960's, the writer was a trainee in a large university-based community-funded child psychiatry clinic in Baltimore and in Cincinnati. Both of these children's clinics were conducted in large hospital settings, and both ostensibly served, among others, families of the Ap-

palachian migrant poor. The writer's experience in both clinics sharply highlighted Ford's remarks. Migrant families were referred in great numbers to these agencies, but a majority of them did not return after meeting the large, strange staff in the unfamiliar setting and after encountering insistence on regular appointments for their succeeding visits. Too often, the writer feels now, these clinics, like many other community institutions that try to reach the Appalachian poor, took the position that their responsibility ended when the families had demonstrated low motivation for self-help by failing to return for care. Clinic services were available only on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. The customary rationalization of this position was that the clinics simply had insufficient staff to do otherwise. In one clinic, personnel were acutely aware of their failure to meet the needs of the Appalachian migrant poor, but were at a loss as to how to break through these barriers of apparent apathy or resistance.

The initial point at which these health care agencies failed in delivering health services to Appalachian migrant families was their lack of understanding of the lifestyle of these families. The personal orientation of the mountaineer steeped in familism makes it very difficult, virtually impossible at first, for him to relate to total strangers in unfamiliar agency settings. In addition, his aversion to routines and to the agency's time-oriented casework schedules generally guarantees that he will not cooperate with the agency. This raises the question as to whether the particular lifestyle of the person in the Appalachian lower class forever precludes his receiving help from various community institutions. I think not, on the basis of my own sharply contrasting experiences in helping to deliver one type of health service to Appalachian families: field child psychiatry out-patient clinics in several local county health departments in eastern Kentucky. My experiences in Baltimore and Cincinnati were ones of sharing many failures with my colleagues in the urban agencies. However, the experiences I have had in helping many families and their children through the Manchester Project, as our field clinics are called, over the past eleven years have erased forever from my mind any doubts that all kinds of health services and, presumably, other types of services as well, can be brought effectively to Appalachian families. The essential difference between my experiences of clinical failure, on the one hand, and clinical success, on the other, is not, I feel, any factor that resides in me as a person or as a child psychiatrist. Rather, the essential difference that spelled relative success in the Manchester Project was the different point of view of this work itself. It took squarely into account the fact that Appalachian people are *person oriented*; their characteristic of orientation to the self, to the intimate, and to the personal proved to be the point at which community agencies can begin to relate to them.

It should be mentioned here that the Manchester Project was originally formulated by persons in the region, the county health officer and the staff of senior public health nurses, who were well acquainted with the families they served and, in turn, were accepted by these families as familiar givers of aid.⁴ In a mountain area such a public health team is of much greater relative importance than its urban counterpart. In the first place, there are fewer doctors (in some counties, none at all). Besides, a high proportion of the patients are poor, from isolated parts of the area, and many of them would be unaware of the existence of medical and psychiatric care if they were not sought out by the nurses.

At the outset of our project, the local health officer and the nursing staff discussed local attitudes toward health care and some of their underlying causes. They pointed out that patients from mountain areas are almost overwhelmed by the scattered specialized facilities of the large hospitals and medical centers far from their homes. From time to time families have had to be referred to these centers for needed diagnostic and treatment services. These families were frightened, when away from their area and kin, by what they viewed as relatively impersonal institutionalized services. For these reasons, the nurses pointed out to us, Appalachian families tend to differ from the majority of Americans who want to and therefore can accept health care service wherever it is available.

The nurses gave us several compelling reasons why our jointly-staffed mental health field clinics for children should be based in the local health departments. First, there was the trend, already mentioned, for families to gravitate to the local health departments for their other health needs. Second, because of the traditional primacy of extended family or kinship ties, a family's acceptance of any health service depended upon their acceptance of the person who gave the service. Third, Appalachian families shared certain other characteristics in their attitudes toward health care: they reacted to symptoms of disease and to the idea of disease itself with strong fears and anxieties. Many families, having little education and low income and hampered by barriers of language, were all too often confused, overly apprehensive, or even overwhelmed by health problems. Because of the traditional tendencies of the Appalachian individual to attempt to cope with anxiety by turning inward in his close family system, only a health care person long known and familiar could be accepted in a helping role.

The senior public health nurses and the home health aides (paraprofessionals) understood this highly important familistic orientation. These nurses and aides had flexibility in time and schedules, the mobility to reach people in isolated areas, and above all a visible proximity to the people who needed their services. In addition, their un-

derstanding of the culture equipped them, generally, for social encounter and interaction. Though themselves in the middle and professional class, the nurses were generally products of the cultural background of their people. They could therefore establish rapport much more easily than could other middle-class professionals. Accordingly, the public health nurses and aides, working through various health services, could counter or offset the traditional reluctance of many Appalachian families to seek help in problem-solving from outside agencies or clinics.

These points cannot be overstressed, so crucial are they, I feel, for the planning and delivery of all types of health services in the Appalachian region. In effect, many Appalachian families lack the psychological mobility that would lead them to seek specialized health care outside their local communities. They cooperate far better in extended health care if it is offered by persons in familiar settings.

In our jointly planned and established work with emotionally troubled children and their families, we deliberately sought to use the diagnostic treatment services of the familiar and accepted public health nurses and aides. We deliberately took our place with other public health programs in the region. In a sense, we rode for acceptance on the coattails of the nurses and aides, who, long familiar to the families we served together, were called by their first names. When we would first meet with an understandably anxious new family that had been referred to one of our field clinics, we would frequently hear something like: "Faye [the nurse in the family's district] came to see me, Doctor. She said the teachers over at Lockard's Creek have been riled by Sammy. Faye brought me today. She says it's all right to talk to you." This was typical. The considerable extent to which we were able to win the trust and cooperation of individual patients and their families was due, first and foremost, to the nurses' and aides' understanding of the families we served together. They had, in advance, personalized our clinics. No family got service from a stranger.

In addition to this important concept of personalizing services in order to reach troubled Appalachian children and their families, there are some culturally-derived personal strengths these people possess with which helping professionals can ally themselves toward assisting them.

Two very important strengths that can be utilized by helping professionals to assist Appalachian children and adults are a marked capacity for essentially well-relatedness and an intense feeling-orientation possessed by these people in all socioeconomic classes. Both of these strengths (parts of their personality) are, I feel, derivatives of that marked focus on their children's infancies so characteristic of Appalachian families. I refer here to extensive data we obtained from a survey of Appalachian child development we undertook in 1964 prior to actual

operation of the field clinics.⁵ At the time, we were looking for a normal developmental yardstick by which appropriately to measure deviations from regional normative development in children.

We are well aware that one of the most important developmental tasks of the infant raised in any culture during the first year is to establish a satisfying dependency upon his mother. The mother-child relationship should be a close, satisfying, and supportive one. The previous work of other observers of Appalachian family life and our own survey on child development in the region suggest how abundantly true this is for local infants. Although in later years Appalachian children encounter difficulties in development, particularly children of the lower class, that first year or two of infancy is, from the infant's standpoint, relatively conflict-free.

Out of the mother-child relationship comes the foundation for the development of the child's feelings about himself, about people, and about the world in which he lives. If the relationship is a satisfying one, the infant begins to develop a sense of trust in himself and in his world, the first year being the decisive stage for the acquisition of this feeling.⁶ He acquires a feeling of his own worth and adequacy and a feeling that the world is a pleasant, giving, and rewarding place. He begins to feel that people can be trusted. He is interested in the world. He investigates, explores, and tests. He attempts to communicate and to make meaningful interpersonal relationships. Relatedness, thus, is very much a positive derivative of an adequate infancy period.

Our first impression of this inherently strong* capacity Appalachian families of all three social classes have for trusting relationships was gained from their children. They related very well in clinic interviews, in their schools at the time of our consultation visits, and in their homes. Any initial reserve was soon dropped. For example, their capacity to relate led them to wait quietly, even with nonanxious anticipation, for their dental appointments in the health departments and for preschool physical examinations by unfamiliar visiting pediatricians. Most of us, as urban physicians, are accustomed to the waiting room crying and restlessness of young children. Thus, I was at first surprised to find Appalachian children waiting quietly, without crying or excitedly giggling with each other. A passing adult could quickly relate with a waiting child and find pleasure in the encounter.

The Appalachian child's capacity to form a quick, trusting relationship with the public health nurses, the health aides, and our medical team was a prime mover in the rapid progress many children made in treatment interviews. Success in nursing intervention, casework, and psychotherapy depends on the relationship between therapist and child. It is the touchstone for any progress out of whatever difficulties the child may

have. The same could be said of the parents of these children. Adults, too, related well with others, although the thawing out period was sometimes longer than the time required by the children. Once their initial reticence was overcome, however, parents made good use of the relationship. In time, they were able to involve themselves in interviews with remarkable warmth and candor. Although many families were geographically and culturally outside the mainstream of county life, generally they related with us with no sense of personal isolation. In fact, their relatedness often combined such warmth, openness, and earthiness that we were reminded of the traditional spontaneity of young children. Gone were the layers of sophistication, telling the physician and others what families think should be said, that so often mark and impede initial treatment interviews with urban families. Such qualities of relatedness enabled the therapist to focus very quickly on family functioning (provided, of course, the nurses and aides who knew the family, and the therapist himself, had given care in personalizing their initial introductions and meeting).

Because so many of the families referred to the mental health clinic were action oriented, seeking primarily symptomatic relief for crisis situations, the mutual capacity for relationship between the helping professional and parents had to be utilized quickly as the basis for helping a given family redirect its efforts with the children. Parents more readily tried out redirecive suggestions made by the helping person because they had quickly established a bond with the outside person. The establishment of this bond, as we experienced it, required the interaction of two factors.

The first factor, the one just mentioned, was the basic capacity for trust which Appalachian children and adults alike possess. The second, outlined earlier in this discussion, had to do with the therapist's observing (often in the family's home setting) whatever they value most intimately and highly and allying himself with them. For example, the writer has spent many *mutually* pleasure-filled hours in viewing a family's prize hog, or beehives, or the new kittens in the smokehouse, or their gardens, or their canning of wild blackberries, or the new baby—whatever it is that so obviously brings the family genuine personal pleasure—as a way of personalizing his introduction to them. Failure to go through this mutual step, as it has been indicated before, very often precludes the family's effective working with the therapist later because they still see him as a stranger, someone outside their intimate and personal world.

Of great interest to us as clinicians was the observation that the basic capacity for relatedness seemed to cross socioeconomic class lines. For example, the often grubby, ragged children of the lower class we saw were frequently wild, impulse ridden, and manipulative. Yet, along with these traits was a warm way of reaching out to others that we interpreted as

essential relatedness. It is striking how the two personality traits, ability to relate well and yet be simultaneously aggressive and wildly impulsive, find expression in all members of the same lower-class family.

Our conclusion from reviewing the developmental backgrounds of many children of the lower class in Appalachia was that these children are well trained in basic relatedness from infancy on, but are not well trained in acquiring controls over their aggressive impulses. The children are well liked as babies and as older children by all members of the extended family, but frequently they are allowed to do just as they please. Beyond the children's infancies, appropriate developmental lines involving a balance between gratification of needs and delays, limits, and controls are not readily maintained by lower-class families in Appalachia. This seemed to account for the difficulties older lower-class children had with perceptual skills needed for orientation to a new environment, with skills in using language as a tool, and with capacities to store tension (with its attendant level of inner impulse controls, ability to delay gratification, and to accept limits). During the infancy period itself, lower-class families as well as the others freely gave of themselves to children. As an outgrowth of this, the children retained a considerable measure of the ability to relate with others in spite of difficulties with other capacities.

The implications for the mental health and general health fields of this capacity for relatedness should not be underestimated. All forms of health intervention (treatment) involve the giving and the taking of help in an interpersonal context. In my experience, and that of others, the relationship capacities of Appalachian families are very real indeed, and these capacities are not dimmed by the families' migration to other settings. Presumably, then, those who work in any helping capacity with Appalachian families, either locally or in another setting, will find mutual relationship a powerful working tool. For when this capacity is combined with an initial approach that respects the Appalachian individual's orientation to the intimate, the sensory, and the personal, true "personalization of services" has been initiated, and relationships are begun. After the introduction has been personalized, and relationships are begun, services of all types can then *and only then* be brought into focus. The Appalachian individual is thus interested primarily in the helping person and that person's acceptance of him, and only secondarily in what the person has to offer or suggest. This way of orienting his priorities (and ours as helping professionals) is a direct outgrowth of the Appalachian person's training in familism.

The second consideration or ego strength, that of the intense feeling-orientation of Appalachian adults and children, is similarly a derivative from early child development in the region. Children are trained from in-

fancy on to orient themselves to feelings rather than to words. This orientation to feelings is yet another aspect of the Appalachian person's action-orientation; "actions speak louder than words" and "a man is judged by his deeds, not his words" are but two ways of conceptualizing this orientation. Again, an orientation to feelings is a natural outgrowth of the Appalachian person's orientation to the intimate, the sensory, and the personal. In addition, what I have elsewhere called "regional nonverbality," a very important child development theme in the Appalachian region, particularly among members of the lower class, is a powerful social reinforcer of this orientation to feelings rather than to language.⁷

Although space does not permit a full discussion of how difficulties arise among lower-class Appalachian persons in using language as a tool, it can be said that the use of language in the region presents some striking contrasts. On the one hand, there are clear indications that many people in the region find verbal communication very difficult. Theirs is an economy of language amounting to sparseness. The stereotype of the Appalachian mountaineer as a silent, taciturn individual is based on this difficulty. Neighbors of these people characterize them graphically as "quiet-turned." In our field clinics, we have followed a number of the silent members of these relatively silent families. What we have found is that the most severely strained individuals and families are the ones who show the greatest lack of verbal communication. We, and others, feel that this explains why families in the lower and working class in Appalachia, the families having the greatest strains, have the greatest problems in using words as tools. As one impoverished mother put it: "I can't speak, when all my burdens sit so heavy on my chest." This would also explain, I feel, why the most socially isolated families in the region frequently had children with emotional problems based either wholly or in part on nonverbal themes (elective mutism, various psychophysiologic reactions, conversion and dissociative reactions, among others). These children had fewer experiences talking matters over with others than had their peers. Their social contacts had been largely limited to their own strained, relatively silent families. Interestingly, these same children who have trained-in language problems that often impede their progress through reading and speaking in the schools still retain the close, personalized functions referred to earlier as a capacity for well-relatedness. In fact, in clinic settings, in time, they can be found frequently to possess interpersonal skills to an exquisitely sensitive degree. Their early regional training in family closeness and relatedness (regional familism) mentioned before seems to pertain here. An outgrowth of this early training is their skill in observing and correctly interpreting the often subtle, nonverbal behavior of people—the stressed adults in their families—who are relatively silent.

These children have learned, in effect, to follow the feelings rather than the words of others. It is no wonder, then, that many Appalachian children possess such a sensitive feeling-orientation.

The striking phenomenon we have noticed in our field clinics is that the silent families just described exist side by side with others who are quite able to express feelings and ideas sensitively in words. The silent, taciturn stereotype simply does not hold true for all.

Our clinic work in the Manchester Project clearly indicates that many individuals and families, including some of the very poor, are able to express feelings and ideas sensitively in words. These verbal people have been exceptionally able to use word-oriented casework, nursing intervention, and psychotherapy.

Nevertheless, the importance of underscoring regional language problems where they exist in a particular family or individual is to point out the fact that the helping professional needs to learn to read the sensitive nonverbal, behavioral cues that silent Appalachian people give as evidence of the troubled feelings they have, which they have not been able to present in words. Incumbent upon the helping professional, then, is the acquisition of the ability to follow feelings and to look for behavioral cues that exist. And, at the same time, the child and the family can be helped to verbalize these sensitively differentiated feelings of which they are well aware—but have not heretofore been able to express. By doing this, the helping professional taps the Appalachian individual's feeling-orientation in a way that helps him deal more adaptively with inner feeling-states.

What has been discussed here are two specific strengths Appalachian individuals possess—a capacity for relatedness and a sensitive feeling-orientation—helping professionals can utilize to further implement personalized services for the families they would like to assist. Obviously, mental health or even general health services are not the only services needed by the lower-income families in the region. They have a host of inadequacies, calling for new paths in education, welfare, job-training, and recreation. When we consider the Appalachian lower class (the very poor and the poor yet stable working-class families), we face the problem of large gaps in family training of children. I do not think we can expect these lower-class families, by themselves, to identify and remedy these training gaps. Instead, these families will need much continuing personal support from several kinds of community institutions. But, before various institutional systems can render effective service, they must be able to reach the families, which thus far many have not done very successfully. A two-pronged approach to the establishment of relations would seem to be in order. One approach would be to work directly with the families, helping them to function more adequately. The second approach would be to work

with community institutions, aiding their personnel to gain a more empathic understanding of the lower-class families they must serve. Aiding our clinic staff through the years, as I have indicated, have been the strengths Appalachian individuals themselves possess and a willingness to understand their unique lifestyle.

NOTES

¹ David H. Loeff, *Appalachia's Children* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1971). See also Eleanor Pavenstedt, "A Comparison of a Child-Rearing Environment of Upper-Lower and Very Low-Lower Class Families," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 35 (1965), 89-98. See also Robert Coles, "Southern Children under Desegregation," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 120 (1963), 332-44.

² Thomas R. Ford, "Discussion," following David H. Loeff, "Psychiatric Perspective on Poverty," in *Poverty: New Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Thomas Weaver and Alvin Magid (San Francisco: Chandler Press, 1969).

³ Many references are available in Thomas R. Ford, "The Passing of Provincialism," in *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*, ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1962), 9-34. See also Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders* (New York, 1913); John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (New York, 1921); Howard Odum, *Southern Regions of the United States* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1936); Marion Pearsall, *Little Smokey Ridge* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1959); Jack Weller, *Yesterday's People* (Lexington, Ky., 1965); Thomas R. Ford, *Health and Demography in Kentucky* (Lexington, Ky., 1964).

⁴ David H. Loeff, "Appalachian Public Health Nursing: Mental Health Component in Eastern Kentucky," *Community Mental Health Journal*, 5 (1969), 295-303.

⁵ Loeff, *Appalachia's Children*; see also Cyrus M. Johnson, A. Lee Coleman, and William B. Clifford, *Mountain Families in Poverty*, University of Kentucky, Department of Sociology and Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, RS-29 (1967); James S. Brown, "Social Class Origins, Rural-Urban Migration, and Economic Life Chances: A Case Study," *Rural Sociology*, 32 (March 1967), 5-19.

⁶ Erik H. Erikson, "Growth and Crisis of the Healthy Personality," in *Problems of Infancy and Childhood*, ed. Milton J.E. Senn (New York, 1950), Supplement 2; see also Alfred H. Washburn, "Influences of Early Development upon Later Life," in *Relations of Development and Aging*, ed. James E. Birren (Springfield, Ill., 1964), 29-37.

⁷ Loeff, *Appalachia's Children*.

A Sense of Place: The World We Have Lost

JOHN OPIE

An earnest young sociologist worked her way into an Appalachian hollow by tracking down people in little squares marked on a map—"dwellings on intermittent streams." "I finally made it to one and knocked on the door. A young mother appeared. 'You must live here,' I said, pointing to the map. She looked at me with a quizzical expression. 'Reckon I hain't. I's livin hyur,' and she gently stamped her foot on the floor."¹ One is tempted to smile, but at whom, the sociologist or the mother?

The Appalachian mountaineer has a close relationship with his natural surroundings, his own piece of land, the home he lives in. This closeness cannot be measured by a map, as the young mother insisted, nor summarized on a deed or mortgage, nor translated into dollar value on a county tax list.² The mountaineer's way of "living with the land" is so intensely personal that it discourages interpretation by the norms of mass society.

In outward appearance, the Appalachian mountaineer may seem a deprived inhabitant of contemporary America: poverty-stricken, outside the mainstream, his life described as stagnant, stifled, and shunned. The mountaineer, however, sees it differently. He cherishes his independence far more than notions of progress or achievement. Apart from his "place," the outer world appears full of senseless anxiety and conflict. Modern American consumerism is empty, meaningless, and trivial, and it suggests an inability to control one's own life.³ Hardly a world one would trouble to enter if one already has something better. In this light, poverty and deprivation are *not* having one's own plot of land and house somewhere free from the demands of modern society. Mircea Eliade notes that even a contemporary "civilized" person "still preserves an obscure sense of mystical solidarity with his native soil. It is the religious experience of autochthony; the feeling is that of *belonging to a place*, and it is a cosmically structured feeling that goes far beyond family or ancestral solidarity."⁴

In Appalachia man and nature interact intimately. The mountaineer holds to his style because it creates for him satisfactions and happiness not available elsewhere. The land for him is not an idea or abstraction but a

sacred mystery with enormous power and durability. To change or transform it would be to destroy his sense of safety. The "primordial situation" must be preserved. The frontier-like conditions of the first settlement cannot be modified without losing touch with the life-giving quality of the land.⁵ Interference by outsiders—even "do-gooders"—must be repulsed at all costs.⁶

Occasionally some mountaineers leave the home place to try their luck at better jobs and better living in the city. But the outside jobs are often menial because the mountaineers lack special training. They may feel they are being robbed by union dues, by high rents, by installment credit, by taxes and costs of urban life. In time they yearn to return. "If'n you's hain't in th' holler, somethin's missin'. If'n you's missin' th' holler, hit's grindin' you's innards somethin' fierce."⁷ A soldier in Vietnam sends money home to buy him a piece of land near his home, "somethin' I kin come back to."⁸ The home plot of land is a tremendous magnet. In an age of mobility, in which one out of five American families move each year, the Appalachian mountaineer has an unconquerable belief in the land. His place contains his personality. He has his place in the hills. Some folk leave but they always come back. He intends to fight for his place in the hollow and fight to keep it as it is, unchanged.⁹ He feels independent because of his close identification with the land. It is the best place in the world. "Duddie's Branchers want to be stranded in the hollow; for they value their escape from crushing man-made burdens that present false hopes. 'We's jist scratch ourself; you's cut your neck vein.'"¹⁰

This earnestness about one's home habitation has little to do with its comfort, its proximity to abundance, its healthful site. An outsider would notice only "the nothingness of each place."¹¹ Situated on a hillside, the mountaineer's farm may be no more than a plot of corn and vegetables for his own needs, food wrenched from a thin and over-farmed bit of topsoil which is itself being eroded into the gully below. His ancient house may once have been a log cabin, decrepit with years of repair and chinking. It might be insect ridden in summer and freezing in winter. He might or might not have electricity, plumbing, or a privy. Perhaps no road leads to his plot, but only a path. It is not something that most folks would come home to. But he does return, and defends his home with a fervor probably unknown among any other group of Americans.

To dig and plant and hoe the land is an intense personal, psychological, and spiritual experience. "The rhythms of vegetation simultaneously reveal the mystery of life and creation and the mystery of renewal, youth, and immortality."¹² This is called the "chthonic mystery" of agricultural life. The deepest mysteries and profoundest insights into the man-nature relationship are lost in mechanized farming or urban concrete. The very

land itself is touched by antiquity. May Theilgaard Watts writes of Appalachia: "The bedspread, the song, the word, the forest, had one quality in common. Each of them was not only an antique but also a disjunct. That is to say, each of them had been, long ago, cut off, isolated, or disjoined, from others of its kind....the region had so long been a sort of sanctuary, or refugium, for cut-off groups of plants and men and customs." The local magnolia is a floral antique; Oconee-bells are "left-behind plants."¹³ The inhabitant of such a region can sense ties with a distant past and an eternal present. It presents a richness to life that restores the soul.¹⁴ Working the land is a vital function; it renews.

The plot of land the mountaineer knows so intimately is his fixed place, the central axis of his life. It is his reality. All other places are formless and chaotic.¹⁵ He is disoriented anywhere else. His land is a privileged holy place. Eliade writes:

The experience of sacred space makes possible the "founding of the world": where the sacred manifests itself in space, *the real unveils itself*, the world comes into existence. But the irruption of the sacred does not only project a fixed point into the formless fluidity of profane space, a center into chaos; it also effects a break in plane, that is, it opens communication between the cosmic planes (between earth and heaven) and makes possible ontological passage from one mode of being to another.¹⁶

The people that live in unknown places are literally foreigners; they are as unknown as their land is unknown.¹⁷ To be at one's place manifests order, harmony, permanence, health, and safety.¹⁸ One's land is not merely a patch of dirt or an economic unit; it always expresses something transcendent.¹⁹ Its meaning is not abstract or intellectual; it is concretely and intimately connected with the fundamental realities of a satisfying life.

Yet it would be wrong to say that this sensitivity could belong to any group of small farmers working marginal soil. The reaction of the human spirit to nature is not uniform. The relationship to nature is conditioned by one's culture and by one's history.²⁰ Appalachian history can be an enormous frustration, since few conventional records or memoirs exist. Historical background is exceedingly difficult to discover or reconstruct. An English traveler in the United States of 1835 wrote:

The American agriculturalists seem to have little local attachment. A New Englander or Virginian...will...leave the home of his childhood without any visible effort or symptom of regret....How different this is from the Scottish character may be gathered from the fact that a band of Highlanders settled in Virginia are as unwilling to quit that spot as they were to leave their original country.²¹

The first settlers of the upland backwoods of Appalachia were also Scotsmen, but Lowlanders whose history had been eventful. In 1600 the Lowland Scots had but an insecure life, recurrent warfare, abominable economic conditions, a niggardly soil, constant cattle raids, and feuds. The poet John Cleveland observed,

Had Cain been Scot, God had ne'er changed his doom,
Not made him wander, but confined him home.²²

The soil was thin, fields were open, tools and techniques were archaic, life and property insecure. Poverty, cruelty, and lawlessness were not characteristic of any one group or class, but were simply the way of the world.²³

Despite their difficulties, the Lowland Scots were loyal British Protestants. Catholic Ireland was being subdued by military force, and these Scots were encouraged by special privilege to settle on the northern Irish frontier. It was their opportunity to escape hardship. Years of good harvests in Ulster in 1606-07 enticed the Scots to the "free and empty land." They would no longer be tenants but have title to prime farmland. Imposing their ways upon the disfranchised Irish, these Scottish settlers experienced unprecedented prosperity. In Ulster the old feudal institutions of the laird disappeared. Living successfully on their own land, these new Scotch-Irish enjoyed independence, self-sufficiency, freedom from the heavy hand of government, and they built a way of life that would be long remembered. But between 1634 and 1690 their prosperity slipped and confidence dwindled. The native Irish Catholics waged a guerrilla war against them. English troubles led to religious restrictions and economic sanctions.²⁴ These troubles are still remembered by 20th-century Appalachian folk, particularly the activities of a violent English officer, James Graham of Claverhouse, sent to subdue the Ulster Scots. He became an American bogeyman.²⁵ Some Appalachian mothers still threaten their children by saying, "Behave yourself, or Clavers will get you!"

A century of frontier pioneering in Ulster prepared the Scotch-Irish well for their American immigration. Between 1717 and 1776, over 200,000 Scotch-Irish came to America. The first immigrants reported back that "land was cheap, authorities well disposed, the country vast, its soil fertile beyond all expectation." By the 1740's they moved beyond the first settlements in Pennsylvania and into the Shenandoah Valley and North and South Carolina. While many of these immigrants were farmers of some property that could be converted into cash, perhaps 100,000 came as indentured servants, who after four to seven years of service were given tools, cattle, and enough land to farm.²⁶

The importance of the Scotch-Irish pioneering tradition in Appalachia survives in some material culture. The ground plan of many Appalachian houses is identical to the traditional small Ulster farmhouse. While the debate continues over the origins of the American log cabin, there is a strong Ulster flavor in the hewn hardwood logs, cornered in the half-dovetail, the spaces chinked with mud, stones, or slivers of wood. While English cottages were about 16 feet square, the immigrants from Ulster were accustomed to live in rectangular houses, usually 15-16 feet by 21-22

feet, depending upon the length of individual logs. The houses had a cruck roof imported from Scotland. An interesting variation was the double-pen log house—two rooms under a single roof, separated by an open breezeway or dog trot; the passage is similar to the through-passage of some Ulster houses.²⁷

But the house is only one reminder of cultural continuity. Colonial German settlers selected level sites, cleared out the stumps as well as the trees, and plowed up the entire clearing. The Ulstermen, on the other hand, sought out land with hills and valleys. They built on and cleared the hillsides of notches, gaps, or hollows. They did not clear the forest out completely, but continued grazing their animals in it during the summer, just as they had done on the Ulster hills. Rather than replenishing worn farmland in the German style, they preferred to make fresh clearings—"outfields." Patterns of settlement, land use, and housing were similar for Ulster Scots, Scotch-Irish frontiersmen, and Appalachian mountaineers. Land ownership was constantly on their minds. They found themselves often beyond the reach of law and public officials. They kept peace among themselves by developing their own laws and traditions about land rights.²⁸ The mountains were a shield from the outside world. Among the people of the hollow or gap there was a feeling of security and pride. A consumer economy was and still is unknown and not desired. The inhabitant of Appalachia does not look beyond the small patch of earth he manages. His frame of reference could be a mile in length and fifty feet wide.²⁹ The outside world is not attractive. The mountaineer has a deep sense of environmental habitat; his security transcends poverty and scarcity.³⁰ His place is the center of the world: "to settle somewhere, to inhabit a space, is equivalent to repeating the cosmogony and hence to imitating the work of the gods."³¹ The most important fact of life is to settle down on a piece of land. It becomes the perfect place, "combining *completeness* (mountain and water) with *solitude*, and thus *perfect* because at once the world in miniature and Paradise, source of bliss and place of immortality."³²

There is more to the plain and difficult life of the Appalachian mountaineer than meets the eye. His close association with the land extends the American frontier experience into the present day. And this frontier-like existence is based upon a long history. What is satisfied in Appalachian life has been almost removed from mass society—a profoundly fundamental human need to have a "habitat" and know it intimately. The mountaineer might be called a "living fossil" because he seems to remind an urban society of the world it left behind. The Appalachian mountaineer stands as a reminder of a personal quality of life that has become rare in contemporary American society. He knows he belongs.

NOTES

¹Rena Gazaway, *The Longest Mile* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969), 15. A strikingly similar story is told by an African prince who showed a map to his father: "Maps are liars, he told me briefly....The things that hurt one do not show on a map. The truth of a place is in the joy and the hurt that come from it. I had best not put my trust in anything as inadequate as a map, he counseled....I understand now, although I did not at the time, that my airy and easy sweep of map-traced staggering distances belittled the journeys he had measured on tired feet. With my big map-talk, I had effaced the magnitude of his cargo-laden, heat-weighted treks." Quoted in Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York, 1964), 158.

²See Alvin L. Bertrand, "The Emerging Rural South: A Region Under 'Confrontation' by Mass Society," *Rural Sociology*, 31 (1966), 449 ff.

³W. Keith Warner, "Rural Society in a Post-Industrial Age," *Rural Sociology*, 39 (1974), 309 ff.

⁴Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York, 1959), 140.

⁵Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*, trans. Philip Mairet (New York, 1967), 178-9.

⁶See particularly *Our Changing Rural Society*, ed. James H. Copp (Ames: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1964), 343-9.

⁷Quoted in Gazaway, 240.

⁸See Gazaway, 159.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰Quoted in Gazaway, 151. Two other works that should be referred to are Harry M. Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1963), and Jack Weller, *Yesterday's People* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1965).

¹¹Two examples of evaluation of Appalachian traits by "outside" standards are Hart M. Nelson and Eleanor Frost, "Residence, Anomie, and Receptivity to Education among Southern Appalachian Presbyterians," *Rural Sociology*, 36 (1971), 521 ff.; and Norman A. Polansky, "Powerlessness among Rural Appalachian Youth," *Rural Sociology*, 34 (1969), 219-22.

¹²Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 150.

¹³May Theilgaard Watts, *Reading the Landscape of America* (New York: Macmillan, 1975), 1-20.

¹⁴Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 147.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 20 ff.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁷Eliade also writes: "When the Scandinavian colonists took possession of Iceland (*land-nama*) and cleared it, they regarded the enterprise neither as an original undertaking nor as human and profane work. For them, their labor was only repetition of a primordial act, the transformation of chaos into cosmos by the divine act of creation. When they tilled the desert soil, they were in fact repeating the act of the gods who had organized chaos by giving it a structure, forms, and norms." See *The Sacred and the Profane*, 31. See also Eliade's *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Princeton Univ. Press, 1954), 11 ff.

¹⁸Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 115-16.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 118.

²⁰See Fern K. Willits, Robert C. Bealer, and Donald M. Crider, "The Ecology of Social Traditionalism in a Rural Hinterland," *Rural Sociology*, 39 (1974), 334-49.

²¹Quoting Charles Augustus Murray, in Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783* (Ithaca, 1956), 106.

²²Quoted in James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish, A Social History* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1962), 4.

²³*Ibid.*, 11.

²⁴See *ibid.*, 120 ff.

²⁵Charles Knowles Bolton, *Scotch-Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America* (Boston, 1910; rpt. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1974), 300. See also George Fraser Black, *Scotland's Mark on America* (New York, 1921; rpt. San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, 1972), 12, and the *Berea Quarterly*, October 1908, 9.

²⁶See the account in Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 172-6.

²⁷E. Estyn Evans, "The Scotch-Irish: Their Cultural Adaptation and Heritage in the American Old West," in *Essays in Scotch-Irish History*, ed. E. R. R. Green (London: Humanities, 1969), 79-80. See also Henry Glassie, "Southern Mountain Houses: A Study in American Folk Culture" (master's thesis, SUNY, 1965), and Glassie's "The Types of the Southern Mountain Cabin," Appendix C, in Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Study of American Folklore* (New York: Norton, 1968). For methodology, see Carol O. Sauer, "Historical Geography and the Western Frontier" and "The Morphology of Landscape," in *Land and Life*, ed. John Leighly (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967), 45-52 and 315-50, respectively.

²⁸See the discussion in Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 205.

²⁹Gazaway, *The Longest Mile*, 42.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 41-2.

³¹Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 65.

³²*Ibid.*, 153.

Old-Time Baptists and Mainline Christianity

LOYAL JONES

Cratis Williams' grandfather, on being asked to reaffirm that something or other was true, replied, "Hell, son, there ain't that much truth." Truth in any age and in any group, admittedly, is a hard commodity to come by. Religious truth, moreover, is harder to nail down than other more tangible certitudes, and Christian groups have argued from the beginning about what is and is not true and about a proper hierarchy of accepted truths. Appalachian people have had a strong tail-hold on religious truth, but always with an uphill drag. Many have lacked formal education and money, and they have inspired in their fellow countrymen dismay, derision, and eventually that indomitable force, the missionary urge.

No group in the country, in my estimation, has aroused more suspicion and alarm among mainstream Christians than have Appalachian Christians, and never have so many Christian missionaries been sent to save so many Christians than is the case in this region. It is certainly true that Appalachian Christians have criticized one another, and the one group has often tried to win converts from the other. Yet most mainline denominations have not paid much attention to the differences between sects in the mountains and have directed their criticism and missionary efforts indiscriminately at mountain churches.

It is not my purpose to disparage the great contributions made by outside religious groups—in education, health and medicine, and related fields. However, I do want to list a few criticisms of mountain religious beliefs, practices, and values, and then to examine the beliefs of a group of mountain Christians in light of these criticisms. I will concentrate on the radical Baptists of several sects, excluding, of course, the American Baptists and the Southern Baptists. By radical I mean those who attempt to go exclusively to the root, the primary source—in this case the scriptures—for their authority and who do not practice that which is not clearly in the source. These are old-fashioned Baptists in the sense that they have held to a set of beliefs of two hundred years ago, or more, and they have made a great effort to avoid fads and styles in belief and worship. I include the Primitive, Separate, United, Old Regular, Duck River, Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit (who believe each person is born with two seeds, one from God and

one from Satan, with the person going the way of the seed from which he sprouts), Freewill, and a few who style themselves "Missionary" Baptists. While they are not a large body, these Baptist groups number about half a million in the South.¹ All are found in the Appalachian region, and some of them, such as the Old Regular and United Baptists, are found almost exclusively here. There are also a few of these churches in the North, where Appalachian migrants have gone in the last thirty years. These usually are a part of associations back in the mountains.

It is my belief that these Baptists reflect a set of religious beliefs that were typical of a large portion of the people in an earlier age in Appalachia, and elsewhere, and that some of these beliefs persist among other Christian groups in the mountains, including the Southern Baptists, especially in rural areas. It is also my belief that the social values of these sects, which I shall hereafter call Old Baptists, are typical of older Appalachians in general.

Most of these Baptist groups sprang from English and Welsh Baptists who came to this country in Colonial times.² Because of persecution and ridicule in Virginia and elsewhere, some congregations moved as groups into the Appalachians where they might have greater freedom. They had brought hymn singing (distinctive from psalm singing) with them from England and Wales, and many of them have continued in the old style of "lining out" the hymn from noteless songbooks that was initiated in England by the Westminster Assembly of 1644. This practice has died out among some Primitive Baptists, but is still strong among the Old Regular and United Baptists.³ Organs and such are not allowed in most of these groups, since they are not called for in the scriptures.

It is necessary to explain that there are several differences in belief among the various Baptist sects. The most important one is between the predestinarian and the freewill Baptists. The former believe that God predestined—or at least foresaw—that only some would be saved: the latter believe that all may be saved if they heed the Gospel and repent. Many fierce arguments have raged over this theological point. Other disputes have arisen over such issues as musical instruments in worship and organizations to propagate the Gospel. All preach baptism by immersion but argue strenuously against other groups who believe that baptism itself has saving power. One Baptist is reported to have exclaimed in rejoinder to a Christian from another denomination who had declared that only the immersed would get to heaven, "Well, then, heaven is going to be full of catfish and crawdads!" Another said that if baptism alone would save people, he'd get six strong men and forcibly baptize all the scoundrels in his county.

They all believe in a true and living God, who is at once Father, Son,

and Holy Ghost; that the Bible (King James Version) is the only rule of faith and practice; that we are saved from total human depravity by grace and not works; that repentance toward God and faith in Christ are necessary before baptism; that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus and that foot washing is an example, symbolic of what one's relationship with others should be; and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, the righteous to eternal life and the wicked to everlasting punishment. Most believe in practicing what has scriptural authority, and they go further and renounce any practice that *is not* mentioned in the scriptures.⁴

The Primitive Baptists, sometimes called Old School or Hardshell, are the most radical of all Old Baptists, in that they hold to strict scriptural sources and are predestinarian. The Freewill Baptists are the most liberal of these sects, in that they are Arminian, believing all may be saved if they heed and repent. In addition to an earlier separation, the Baptist bodies split in 1840 over the question of missionary societies, Sunday schools, and other such organizations. The other sects I have mentioned fall somewhere between the predestinarian (Hardshell) and the Arminian (Soft Shell) Baptists.⁵

Services are usually held only once a month, either on Saturday night or Sunday morning, although services are arranged in sequence at other churches in the association, so that the faithful may travel to a service each week. The Predestinarian churches do not run revivals and were relatively untouched by the Great Awakenings. They practice foot washing, do much handshaking and embracing during the service, but they preach against the emotionalism that is part of worship in other sects in the mountains, although they may appear to be emotional to mainline Christians.

Let us turn now to the criticisms of mountain religion, relate these to the beliefs of the Old Baptists and then explore some of the beliefs and the authority for them. Criticism of mountain religion has come not only from representatives of mainline church denominations but from a range of socially oriented persons as well, such as those running mountain settlement-type institutions, regional planners, social workers, poverty workers, educators, and representatives of the news media. The main problems usually identified are that mountain people are too traditional (too backward-looking), too little concerned with new ideas for improving social conditions, too literal in interpreting the scriptures, too concerned about personal salvation and not enough with social action, and too adamant about separating worldly and spiritual concerns.

In 1933, Elizabeth Hooker, writing about mountain churches, said, "A large proportion of the members have never seen a church building that is different from the bare, one-room structure used by their own church.

They have not seen a church organ, even of the pedal variety....”⁶ Jack Weller (*Yesterday's People*) charged that “Education of the clergy held no more appeal for the mountaineer than did education of his children” and went on to say that “A kind of lay religion grew up in which each congregation became its own interpreter of the Bible and theology and recognized no new ideas from the outside” and that the mountaineer was “his own highest authority” and he “recognizes no experts, religious or otherwise.”⁷ Weller thought the many “small, struggling churches” to be “extreme and even ludicrous” from the “outsider’s point of view.” Charging that the mountaineer turns to God only in a crisis, Weller states that “Religion thus is a crutch for times of trouble but is not much use in daily life.” Weller’s harshest words are turned toward the quality of the mountain Christian’s life. It is a “convenient religion,” he writes, “not exactly satisfactory for strengthening one’s life,” and he further says that the mountaineer, when faced with temptations, backslides, “instead of using his faith to overcome them,” and he “is likely to blame it all on the devil.”⁸ Earl D. C. Brewer (*Life and Religion in Southern Appalachia*) suggests that a one-room church building is inadequate, and in regard to low church budgets he states, “Salvation may be free, as the song says, but it takes money to build and maintain church plants, provide literature and other facilities, and pay for professional leadership.”⁹

Certainly some of these critical comments do not show an intimate knowledge of Old Baptist beliefs. Hooker appears to think that the lack of organs in worship reflects ignorance or deprivation. The truth is that most of the Old Baptists did not want to see an organ in church because they did not believe that instruments, other than the human voice, should be used. Neither did they want imposing church buildings because, to them, the church is not of this world and the building is only a place to meet. It need only be large enough to house the congregation in one room, since the only activity is the church service. Sunday schools are generally opposed since they are not prescribed in the scriptures. The Black Rock Address of 1832, an important document relating to the Baptist separation, deals with Sunday schools:

They claim the honor of converting their tens of thousands; of leading the tender minds of children to the knowledge of Jesus; of being as properly the instituted means of bringing children to the knowledge of salvation....Such arrogant pretensions we feel bound to oppose. First, because these...are grounded upon the notion that conversion or regeneration is produced by impressions made upon the natural mind by means of religious sentiments instilled into it; and if the Holy Ghost is allowed to be at all concerned in the thing, it is in a way which implies his being somehow blended with instruction, or necessarily attendant upon it; all of which we know to be wrong.¹⁰

The main problem is that Sunday schools are institutions separate from the basic preaching mission of the church, and they depend primarily on the

learning of man rather than upon the inspiration of God.

The Black Rock Address goes on to make it clear that old Baptists are not opposed to education as such:

But whilst we thus stand opposed to the plan and use of these Sunday Schools..., we wish to be distinctly understood that we consider Sunday Schools for the purpose of teaching poor children to read, whereby they may be enabled to read the Scriptures for themselves to be useful and benevolent institutions, worthy of the patronage of all the friends of civil liberty....

And in regards to theological schools, the document discusses general education and theological education in light of the preaching ministry:

....it is not to colleges..., as such, that we have objection. We would cheerfully afford our own children such an education, did circumstances warrant the measure. But we object, in the first place, to sectarian colleges, as such. The idea of a Baptist college, and of a Presbyterian, etc., necessarily implies that our distinct views of church government, of gospel doctrine and gospel ordinances, are connected with human sciences, a principle we cannot admit; we believe the kingdom of Christ to be altogether a kingdom not of this world. In the second place, we object to the notion of attaching professorships of divinity to colleges; because this evidently implies that the revelation which God has made of himself is a human science, on a footing with mathematics, philosophy, law, etc....Thirdly...we believe that Christ possesses perfect knowledge of his own purposes, and of the proper instruments by which to accomplish them... we believe that the Lord calls no man to preach his gospel, till he has made him experimentally acquainted with that gospel, and endowed him with the proper measure of gifts, suiting him for the field he designs him to occupy; and the person giving himself in obedience to the voice of Christ will find himself learning in Christ's own school.¹¹

Hooker told of a conversation between an uneducated preacher and an educated one. Said the uneducated one, "I am empty from the bottom, like this hat," and he held his hat upside down. "The Lord has a chance to fill me. You have an education, and the Lord can fill you only from where the education leaves off."¹²

The small congregations and small budgets mentioned by Weller and Brewer are not problems to the Old Baptists. They know that the numbers of the faithful will always be small, especially in rural areas, and they can not join another church that does not believe as they do in fundamental doctrine. The small budgets are a result of specific beliefs rather than a failure of effort. Since the Church is not of this world, these Old Baptists try to keep it as free of worldly ties as possible. They avoid the pitfall of "programs." They do not *hire* a minister. Rather an ordained elder is elected to preach and do certain clerical functions. He usually serves without any pay whatever, working at another job through the week as everyone else does. This practice reflects the levelling tendencies of the Old Baptists. A regular offering may not be taken, but when there is a need, such as for new pews, or for roof repair, then the necessary money will be raised. Money may also be taken to help someone who is in need, but usually the

congregation is very careful not to set up any worldly institutions in the name of the church.

The whole matter of the human condition, sin, salvation, and the like, which Weller included in his criticism of mountain religion, will be discussed at length, utilizing interviews with several persons (taken by the author and a student, Gary King).

"Worry, worry, worry, worry," said Garfield Sloan, an 84-year-old Estill, Kentucky, resident. "A man who is born of woman is but a few days and full of trouble....Vanity, vanity and vexation to the spirit. That's what it is....You know, man's about the weakest thing that I ever read after in my whole lifetime....The righteous man is tempted on every side....We fight awful hard to get born into this world, but I wouldn't give a nickel to stay."¹³

The late Reverend Buell Kazee, a native of Magoffin County, Kentucky, while not identified with the above-mentioned groups, still held to a rugged simplicity of faith. Thus he found much in common with the Old Baptists, especially on the problem of human sin:

Oh, yes, man is a sinner. He's born that way, though. Man is born in sin and anything he'll do is wrong. Oh, not morally wrong—but he is a sinner against God, because he refuses to let God do what he pleases with His own—His highest creation....Your relationship to man is *moral*. Your relationship to God is *spiritual*, and that takes a new, a re-creation....¹⁴

Most Baptists believe one may backslide but not that the truly saved person will ever slide completely away from grace. Brother Kazee continued:

Paul goes through that in the sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of Romans. He went through the same experience. He says, "why there's the Law saying this, and here I am still disobedient, and when I do good, evil is present with me and that I would, I do not...." I find then a law in my members, the flesh-working-against-the-spirit conflict....Paul discovered that God was dealing with him now as a *child*, under grace rather than a sinner under the Law. A child under grace! And under grace you confess and God forgives your sin, while under Law you must be executed. Now you're born again, now you've paid the penalty in Christ under the Law, and you're declared free and raised up in Jesus Christ....You've a Father to help you in your weakness and sins and to forgive you and cleanse you, and if you rebel against Him he will chasten you, but he won't throw you out. That makes all the difference.

There isn't much of that being preached today. The emphasis now is on *conduct*.¹⁵

The Reverend Otis King, a Missionary Baptist from Harlan County, said about sin and salvation: "We believe in eternal salvation. There ain't nobody perfect; we're going to make a mistake somewhere every day....It's nature....but we are going to get forgiveness....Paul said, 'I die daily.' That meant he'd done something wrong."¹⁶

If the concept of man is that he is a sinner, then the concept of the world is that it is corrupt and that life is tragic. Garfield Sloan commented: "The Lord said that man loved darkness better than he loved

light. He also said that it would wax worse and worse. Well, we couldn't have any hopes of it getting better if it waxes worse and worse. Problem solvers? Yeah, they're going to solve the other man's problem, and they've never had their own solved."

Audrey Wiley, a 54-year-old widow from Estill, Kentucky, said:

My impression of the world....I think we're back in heathenism. I think we're in the worst shape ever been known. I think sin is to blame for a lot of it, cause people are seeking fortune and fame....They're seeking after worldly things....But the Bible tells us that such as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man....God is going to have to intervene to make that change. I think the downfall of our world today is political. That's back of all of it.¹⁷

Josephine Martin, a Floyd County, Kentucky, widow:

The moral situation is very low. I hate to say this about a good old honeycomb nation like we've got, but I think we have got about as low a moral standard as we have ever had. I think that the good old modesty of people has really gone in the past twenty years. As far as I am concerned, we have got one of the most sex-craving times that time ever had. It is such a confusing time that you wonder what is taking place....God said the time would come....Used to on Sunday morning you'd see parents taking their children to church....keeping the Sabbath holy. They don't do that anymore.

"I'll do my thing and you do your thing." I think that is about as silly a remark as I've ever heard in my time.

The most important thing that we could ever have is to have God first in our lives.¹⁸

T.G. Bates of Hazard, Kentucky, an Old Regular Baptist elder, takes an individualist's stand on modern times:

We're living in the awfulest time on earth right now. The Bible tells me that men in the last days will do what? Will do anything to make a proselyte—making somebody just like you are. And when he makes him so he's a two-fold child of hell more than he is himself....This government or that government is trying to make everybody just like they are, and the churches are in the same mood. They want to make everybody believe as they do. They criticize you because you don't believe like they do—and say that you won't go to heaven. The Son of God never said that.¹⁹

Brother Buell Kazee again:

I take the position that we are in the day of the "light stuff": I don't think the *depth* of spiritual life in the churches today is very noticeable....I could have played the banjo in church..., but I would have put myself in the position of mixing banjo-playing with...church work. Of course, that's what's happening right now. There's Johnny Cash on Billy Graham's program the other night, just whooping it up, you know, and telling all about what "the Lord meant to him" and playing in Las Vegas in the last six months. I just don't see how you can mix it...like that.

The "Crusade" has taken people *away* from the church, away from the interest in church life....They're drawing the money from the churches, the church members, to those "big" things....There isn't a man or woman who can appear on Billy Graham's program who hasn't been a great "success" *in the world*. That is to say, his success in the world *qualifies* him to appear on the crusade program. He has to be a headliner in the world....They had a fellow who was the world's champion yo-yo artist on this program in Lexington....Now I've preached 57 years, and my witness, beside his, wouldn't be worth

two cents....And this is, as I see it, pure sham, because most of the people who are dedicated to Christ in the real sense wouldn't have any time for any of that other stuff.²⁰

The Old Baptists and the liberal mainline Christians, then, are at loggerheads over involvement with the world. The proponents of the social gospel, as well as other Christians who feel that there is no separation between religion and the world are critical of the fundamentalist Baptists for keeping aloof from the world—of being other-worldly. But the Old Baptists are equally critical of the more modern churches for getting too much involved in the world, and not being able to see the difference between the world and the life of the spirit. Had St. Paul not said, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). Had not Paul also asked how one may be justified under grace, "By what law? By works?" and had answered, "Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:27, 28).

The Old Baptists are not opposed to getting involved in the world just because they see it as corrupt but because they see that it is easy to be led away from the basic relationship with God. Neither do they doubt that many "programs" are "good." Brother Kazee:

Religion is popular now, it's good business and good entertainment, but it's shallow, nothing rugged about the Old Cross now. Well, it's got some good things in it and a lot of gospel. But, there's a lot of difference between "good" and that which is "from God." Keep that in mind. A Christian must never ask "Is it Good?" He must ask "Is it of God?" That's where the Christian's life is centered, and he must not become absorbed with the goodness of the world as if it were the godliness of the Lord.

But you understand, the Devil's not mean, he's not got a forked tail and horns; he's a god, he's a counterfeit god, he's going to be as much like God as he can without being God.... The Devil's got more religion going on than the Lord has, and it's "good" religion, it has humanitarianism in it, it has morality in it, it's got all the marks that we are looking for as *good* in it. But godliness...that's something else.... You see, good, honest people are deceived by Satan: it isn't the fellow who's not honest. He's working on very religious people.... That's where he's working. But the deception lies in the Devil getting them to believe something other than the word of God. You have to be guided by *that word*.²¹

Many of the Old Baptists are nevertheless involved in the world. It's just that they are not involved *as the church*. They believe, if I may state it again for emphasis, that the church is not of this world. It is not an institution that can add new "programs." It is a fellowship of Christians, and it is a preaching mission. To preserve this concept, they have kept their church buildings simple; they have taken in and disbursed a minimum of money; and they have not ensconced their ministers in an "office." As a church they have tried to keep themselves "unspotted from the world." However, as Christian individuals and non-church groups, they *have* been involved in the world. One could find numerous examples of community

involvement—of comforting the bereaved, feeding the sick, caring for those in trouble, and the like. Some have gone further and done heroic battle in struggles about which their critics have accused them of not being concerned. It was Ollie Combs, a member of the Old Regular Baptist Church, who sat down in front of and stopped the bulldozers trying to strip her land, who was carried off to jail, and who later testified before the Kentucky legislature to bring in the first strong strip-mine regulations in Kentucky. This bill was called the "Widow Combs Bill." Dan Gibson, an Old Regular Baptist elder, stopped the strippers on his stepson's land, and he and Mrs. Combs were important members of the Appalachian Group to Save the Land and People.²² The Reverend Otis King, a Missionary Baptist preacher from Harlan County, electrified viewers of the NET film, "Appalachia: Rich Land, Poor People," with his evangelical denunciation of absentee ownership and the rape of Kentucky, and he lectured the state police with equal fervor during the Brookside Strike in Harlan County for mistreating the women on the picket lines. Mr. King, who worked in the mines for 46 years, stated with profound certitude, "I'm three things: I'm a Christian; I'm a Baptist; and I'm a union man." Recently, I heard the Rev. Tom Sutton, of the United Baptist Church at Vest, Kentucky, use the pulpit to announce a meeting of the Knott County Citizens for Social and Economic Justice. The sermon that followed was related strictly to God's kingdom, but that afternoon, in a public school building, Brother Sutton and other Knott Countians discussed ways of fighting an outside group seeking to take over the land of hundreds of Knott Countians on questionable colonial charters they claim to own.

I trust my point is clear. The Old Baptist may get involved in whatever his conscience leads him to so long as it does not violate the doctrines of the church, but the church, as such, must not become involved in worldly pursuits.

There are ample Biblical passages, especially in St. Paul's letters, that support the doctrines of these Baptist churches. The scriptures describe the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of the water (Matthew 3:11-17) in a way that is in keeping with Baptist belief. The act of foot washing is also described: "if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). St. Paul made it clear that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," whether or not they have been saved and are trying to live right (Romans 3:23). Indeed, "the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Galatians 3:22). The devil and his influence in the world are discussed in Ephesians 6:11, 12: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against prin-

cialties, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." And the much debated point of predestination is dealt with in Ephesians 1: "...he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love...in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will...." Finally, the Second Coming and Resurrection are described in I Thessalonians 4 and 5:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

In passing, it seems important to acknowledge that Appalachian social values and mores have been greatly influenced by religion and by the scriptures. The familistic lifestyles, the levelling tendencies, the modesty, the love for tradition, the lack of a taste for confrontation are all part of the belief system. Here are some Bible verses which have influenced beliefs and behavior:

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. II Thessalonians 2:5

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God has received him. Romans 14:2

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.... See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. I Thessalonians 5:9,15

I submit that the beliefs of the Old Baptists are out of kilter with modern religious thought, which is centered around missions, programs (within and outside the church), social action, a belief that the Christian politician, educator, administrator, psychiatrist, T-group leader, etc., can change the world, can improve human nature, can perhaps create heaven here.

That these Baptists have faults, as other Christians do, I acknowledge. But it seems to me that there is a quality of faith and of life among them that ought to be understood and appreciated. They operate in abstract and intellectual realms in discussing their faith, contrary to the claim by some that they lack an ability to think in the abstract. They have a clear sense of the spiritual as opposed to the worldly. They are not led around by fads and styles. They believe in serving one another. In spiritual matters they place trust in no earthly being but in the scriptures and in the Holy Spirit, and they have a respect for traditions. Perhaps they are too religious to suit our modern tastes.

NOTES

¹Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sect in America* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949), 196-215.

²William H. Tallmadge, "Baptist Monophonic and Heterophonic Hymnody in Southern Appalachia" (paper read at joint meeting of Society for Ethnomusicology and the Sonneck Society, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., October 18, 1975), 1-5.

³*Ibid.*, 1.

⁴Sources are Articles of Faith from various Baptist sects.

⁵Clark, 203-7.

⁶Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands: Native Churches and Missionary Enterprises in the Southern Appalachian Area* (New York: The Polygraphic Company of America, Inc., 1933), 161.

⁷Jack E. Weller, *Yesterday's People* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1966), 122-3.

⁸*Ibid.*, 124-8.

⁹Earl D. C. Brewer and W. D. Weatherford, *Life and Religion in Southern Appalachia* (New York: Friendship Press, 1962), 75-7.

¹⁰W. J. Berry, ed., *The Kehukee Declaration and Black Rock Address with other Writings Relative to the Baptist Separation between 1825-1840* (Elon College, N.C.: Primitive Publications, n.d.), 26-7.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 28-34.

¹²Hooker, 161.

¹³From an interview with Garfield Sloan, Estill, Kentucky, by Gary King, Summer 1975.

¹⁴"Loyal Jones and Buell Kazee," *Katallagete*, 5 (Fall 1975), 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶From an interview with Rev. Otis King, by Loyal Jones, March 12, 1974.

¹⁷From an interview with Audrey Wiley, Estill, Kentucky, by Gary King, Summer 1975.

¹⁸From an interview with Josephine Martin, Estill, Kentucky, by Gary King, Summer 1975.

¹⁹From recordings of Elder T. G. Bates of Hazard, Kentucky, supplied by Minnie Bates Yancey.

²⁰"Jones and Kazee," 5.

²¹*Ibid.*, 10.

²²Loyal Jones, "Mrs. Combs and the Bulldozers," *Katallagete*, Summer 1966, 18-24.

Industrialization and Violence in Appalachia in the 1890's

GORDON B. McKINNEY

It is the feud that most sharply differentiates the...mountaineer from his fellows...the feud means, of course, ignorance, shiftlessness, incredible lawlessness, a frightful estimate of the value of human life; the horrible custom of ambush, a class of cowardly assassins who can be hired to do murder for a gun, a mule, or a gallon of moonshine.¹

This observation made in 1901 by a sympathetic novelist reveals how significant a part of the mountaineer stereotype violence had become. Prohibition and labor-management confrontations provided additional examples of social conflict in the 1920's and 1930's that kept the image alive.² While the traditional picture of the Southern mountain people has slowly changed in the twentieth century, the highlanders' penchant for violent reaction to opposition and exploitation seems to make that part of the stereotype endure. In fact, a recent writer characterized Appalachian history as one "compounded of Indian wars, civil war and intestine feuds, of layered hatreds and of violent death."³ On a more popular level, the hillbilly cartoon character Snuffy Smith is portrayed as constantly willing to defend himself with his trusty gun against government officials, the sheriff, and other mountain dwellers.

This popular image was largely created by a series of spectacular events that took place at the end of the nineteenth century. The first of these notorious eruptions was the bloody climax of the Hatfield-McCoy feud in 1888.⁴ The nation was appalled by the ruthlessness of the family fighting and concerned over the implications of the near civil war between Kentucky and West Virginia caused by the legal complications. In 1893 the highland city of Roanoke, Virginia, exploded in a frenzy of racial hatred and anarchy.⁵ A large number of people were killed, and the inability of local authorities to punish the guilty convinced observers that the mountain people accepted violence as a legitimate part of their lives. The most astounding of the incidents occurred in early 1900. The Kentucky gubernatorial campaign of 1899 was extremely acrimonious with most of the controversy centering around liberal Democratic candidate William Goebel. A split in the Democratic party allowed the Republicans to win the election by fewer than 2,000 votes, and Goebel and the Democrats announced that they were going to contest the results in the Democratically

controlled legislature. As the legislative session opened, Goebel was shot, and just before he died the legislature declared him the lawfully elected governor.⁶ A special militia of mountain Republicans was blamed—with some justification—for the assassination. The national press attacked the highlanders and demanded to know what type of people would perpetrate this type of barbarity.⁷

Several theories have been advanced to explain this sudden outburst of violent behavior. A number of authors have stressed the absence of effective law enforcement and the isolation from educational and cultural influences.⁸ These factors undoubtedly helped to contribute to the general condition of mountain society. But they were present in the previous decades as well and do not explain the unusual events of the 1890's. Other observers feel that the ethnic background of the people—described as Scottish or Scotch-Irish—provides the explanation.⁹ This seems highly unlikely. For one thing it is nearly impossible to establish with any certainty exactly what the ethnic background of the mountain people was. In addition, social scientists now reject the idea of inherited social characteristics.

Most of the above explanations have been offered without any real attempt to examine in detail the nature of the violence that afflicted Appalachian society in the 1890's. Even those writers who attempted to defend the mountain people used much the same explanations. William G. Frost, President of Berea College, and novelist John Fox, Jr., were both forced to rationalize the mountaineer's behavior in unflattering terms. Frost pointed to lack of educational facilities, sectarian religion, and geographical isolation as factors that explained the aberrant behavior.¹⁰ Fox also blamed poor education and little communication with the outside world for the feuding. These suggestions do not offer specific motivations for individual acts, however.

Thus it is important to concentrate not on the general nature of the mountain people in the 1890's but instead on specific violent incidents. When Appalachian conflict is viewed in this manner, two broad categories of episodes become obvious. The first consists of those which can be readily explained by known historical forces. There is a second group of incidents that appear to defy rational historical explanation and which attracted much of the public attention during this period. These categories are arbitrary and need to be more thoroughly examined before any final conclusions are reached, but they do offer a convenient analytical framework.

There were three clear examples of conflict resulting from definable historical causes. Although the categories are somewhat oversimplified, the following definitions will allow investigators to discriminate between

different types of mountain violence:

- (a) It is clear that many incidents were a carry-over from the Civil War. These grudges were based on the unique position of the mountain people during the war and the suffering they endured. This form of violence was rational in the sense that there was an overt cause.
- (b) Some of the conflict was generated by worsening race relations in the 1890's. Again this was a rational reaction on the part of the mountaineers in that they reacted as most other white Americans of the time did.
- (c) Direct labor-management confrontations in the 1890's were also part of national developments, and the battles in Appalachia could not be regarded as unique in American society.

These three types of violence, in fact, marked the mountain men as part of the American mainstream.

The negative impact of the Civil War on the highlands of the upper South has long been known. Some observers of mountain violence are convinced that this factor alone accounts for much of the conflict in Appalachia in the 1890's.¹¹ There is little question about the fact that the mountain counties of the South suffered tremendously during the war. One reason was the need of major army units of both the Confederacy and the Union to secure provisions from the local populations as they fought. The greatest suffering was experienced in East Tennessee, but individual mountain families in other states endured similar privations. The Longstreet-Burnside battles in East Tennessee in the winter of 1863 and 1864 resulted in great hardships for all mountain dwellers.¹² Because of limited resources the civilian population was often required to give more than they could and still feed their families. One East Tennessean complained:

...the Union Army is more destructive to Union men than the Rebel Army ever was. Our fences are burned, our horses are taken, our people are stripped in many instances of the very last vestige of subsistence, and when the best Union men in the country make appeals to the soldiers, they are heartlessly cursed as rebels....¹³

Confederate sympathizers fared no better as the two armies continued to live off the land. The situation became so desperate that the East Tennessee Relief Association raised \$139,000 from Northern audiences to prevent widespread starvation.¹⁴

As bad as the presence of regular armies was, the mountain population suffered even more from guerrilla warfare. The mountain region provided a haven for draft evaders and deserters, and groups of these men preyed upon the local population.¹⁵ In addition there was a great deal of conflict generated by the local population itself. Many mountain counties had no way to maintain respect for the law, and justice had to be secured by the individual.¹⁶ There can be little doubt that some of the family feuds that

plagued mountain society after the war were caused by these circumstances. The notorious Knott County "War" in eastern Kentucky was fought between factions led by opposing Confederate and Union guerrilla leaders.¹⁷ The lingering bitterness is easy to understand when one considers the tremendous price that the mountain people paid. In East Tennessee alone approximately 2,500 civilians lost their lives because of guerrilla activities.¹⁸ Each mountain community contained several individuals who suffered injuries like those reported by one Tennessean: "I lost the sight of my left eye, also my skull were [*sic*] broken, my physical and mental health lost, and my means for support destroyed by the combattants [*sic*]...."¹⁹

Despite the pervasiveness of the Civil War experience, violence in mountain society came from other sources as well. Like the rest of the South, the highlands experienced a crisis in race relations in the 1890's. Calling the new phenomenon a "phobia," historian George M. Fredrickson observed: "In 1893...Southern mobs were beginning to torture and burn their black victims, instead of simply stringing them up...."²⁰ Although the percentage of black population in Appalachia was actually declining in the late nineteenth century, racial violence increased.²¹ There were at least fifteen lynchings during the last decade of the century in the mountain counties, and a number of them involved several victims. In 1891 four blacks were lynched in Clifton Forge, Virginia, after a group of white caps was formed to force blacks to accept a subordinate status.²² Some mountain white leaders defended lynching as an acceptable means of social control.²³ Even when the result was not lynching there was an undercurrent of hostility that poisoned mountain society.

Another important cause of violence in Appalachia in the 1890's was increasing conflict between capital and labor. Since coal production was the major industry of the region, the mines became the center of the confrontations. The first crisis occurred in East Tennessee, and the major issue was the use of convict labor to replace free workers. Starting in 1891 and continuing for three years, free miners challenged the convict lease system and finally resorted to attacks on state and company property to force an end to the arrangement.²⁴ The situation became a major political issue in the state, and local Republican politicians worked with the miners to end convict labor in Tennessee.²⁵ The depression of the 1890's brought unemployment and lower wages. The miners reacted to the changing circumstances with strikes, the most serious of which took place in West Virginia in 1894 and involved the first battles in Appalachia between a union and a state government.²⁶ As industrialization spread throughout the highlands this type of violence increased in both extent and bitterness.

These three forms of conflict all had a strong historical base. There

were similar outbreaks in other parts of the country where similar conditions prevailed. The significance of this fact can be gauged by investigating a type of violence that did not appear in Appalachia. A major study of vigilante groups in the United States in the nineteenth century identified 326 such movements.²⁷ Only one of these was in the Southern highlands. Significantly that movement developed in Sevier County, Tennessee, in the 1890's. The conclusion that must be derived from this information is that the history of the region produced conditions that encouraged certain types of violence and discouraged others.

People who observed the mountain people in the 1890's were painfully aware of another type of conflict in Appalachian society as well. Seemingly irrational acts of violence—feuds, homicides, and political assassinations—appeared to be a normal part of the mountaineer's life style. It was this seemingly unmotivated violence that was largely responsible for the creation of the enduring hillbilly stereotype. Fortunately some recent work by social historians has provided students of the mountain region with the analytical tools necessary to understand the explosion of violence that took place. With these discoveries it is now possible to investigate and explain the basis for the events that captured the nation's imagination.

As early as 1887 German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies discovered that industrialization produced a crisis in a predominantly rural and agricultural society. He noted that many people were forced to ignore traditional patterns of behavior and loyalty. They were unable to sustain themselves through their local interests but instead were forced to identify with larger social groups. As a society underwent this transition many individuals resisted and serious social dislocation took place.²⁸ Recently American historian Robert Wiebe has applied these insights to American society. Wiebe traces the rise of the Progressive movement and documents how businessmen, lawyers, doctors, and educators transferred their loyalty from their communities to national standards of professionalism. Thus, the medical doctor owed his primary loyalty to the American Medical Association rather than to the particular health needs of one location.²⁹ Wiebe also notes that the rapidity with which this transformation took place left many people behind—bewildered and bitter.

English historian Eric J. Hobsbawm has made a special study of those people left behind by industrialization. He discovered that the societies he studied had several points in common. They were rural, pre-capitalist, and "profoundly and tenaciously traditional."³⁰ This description would fit most Southern mountain communities during the 1890's. Hobsbawm noted that these societies often were marked by irrational forms of violence. The people would strike out at those who threatened them without having any program to alleviate the problems confronting them. Hobsbawm noted

that the following conditions often promoted a violent reaction:

[Violence] is most likely to become a major phenomenon when their traditional equilibrium is upset: during and after periods of abnormal hardship, such as famines and wars, or at moments when the jaws of the dynamic modern world seize the static communities in order to destroy and transform them.³¹

Since the Southern highlands had recently suffered through the Civil War and faced the full impact of the American industrial revolution in the 1890's, it was a prime example of the conditions Hobsbawm cited.

Perceptive observers of mountain life in the 1890's discovered most of the reactions that Hobsbawm notices in his study. For example he notes the rise of the social bandit—Robin Hood—who ignored the law and lived by the values respected by his community. The following description of a western North Carolina man illustrates how this process took place in Appalachia:

Baxter Shelton, the reputed outlaw of Madison County, is only 22 years of age. He is a kind hearted man and stands by his friends under all circumstances. He is a man who would rather die than be termed a coward. He has expressed himself as anxious to get away from Laural, but feels he would be accused of cowardice were he to leave that section....He is reputed to have many good qualities and good traits of character. Investigations often show that he acts from principles of self defense in many cases.³²

The sentiments expressed by this reporter were commonly held. A mountain man was judged to be guilty only when he did not live according to community standards. Even murder could be forgiven if the crime was committed for acceptable reasons.

Conflict was expressed in more than individual action. Whole mountain communities became battlegrounds as one Kentucky editor complained:

The town is an arsenal. Firearms of the worst kind are seen on all sides. When armed bodies of men come openly on the streets in defiance of one another; when guns are sneaked in; when preparations continually go on for war, then there will be no peaceful settlement, but sooner or later the outbreak will come....³³

As the newsman observed, the presence of a tense and armed population often led to killings. In fact most mountaineers were aware that the level of violence had greatly increased in the 1890's.³⁴ There seemed to be no way to stop the killing, however, and most of the population resigned themselves.

Although there seemed then to be no pattern to the conflicts, it is possible to divide these events into two broad categories now. The most obvious was a tremendous increase in attempted political assassinations. In the United States as a whole, political killings have been relatively rare. Between 1790 and 1968 only eight governors and nine congressmen were victims of attempted or actual murders.³⁵ Significantly, four of these crimes involved Southern mountaineers in the 1890's. Three former congressmen were shot during the decade and one died. In each instance the assailant was defending his "honor" and seemed to be motivated by

political considerations. The most spectacular of the assassinations occurred in Kentucky in 1900. William Goebel, Democratic contestant for governor, was killed by a mountaineer supporter of the Republican candidate.³⁷ This seemingly senseless string of political violence was evidence of a deeper malaise that infected mountain elections.

The 1890's was a period of profound political disruption in Appalachia. In the years after Reconstruction the Republican party assumed the role of spokesman for and defender of the mountain population. Mountain Republican politicians made every effort to satisfy the needs of the farmers, businessmen, civil war veterans, and the poor.³⁸ They also tried to prepare the Appalachian population for the stresses of the industrial revolution. In an effort to maintain themselves in office, these politicians ignored larger issues and concentrated on immediate problems. When the depression of the 1890's struck the highlands, the mountain voters discovered that the old political bosses had few solutions for the suffering. New leaders appeared who preached the doctrines of the protective tariff and business leadership of society. These new leaders—described effectively by Tonnies and Wiebe—seized control of the Republican organization and used it to begin the systematic exploitation of the people and resources of Appalachia.³⁹ The loss of community political control distressed many mountain people, and the violence that followed was a predictable and therefore rational response.

The second major strain of violence could be properly described as defense of community values. This is a rather broad category and includes many seemingly unrelated events in it. There is an underlying unity, however. All of the incidents reflected the inability of mountaineers to understand that their life style would have to change. Many mountain people viewed anything outside their families or local communities as a threat. The advent of industrialization insured that virtually every mountain dweller would have to make major adjustments in his life. As in politics the big corporations invaded the mountain economy and dominated it. No longer were the rural people free to determine their economic future, and in addition they were now subject to the vagaries of a national business cycle.⁴⁰ The rapidity with which these profound alterations in highland society took place left many of the inhabitants bewildered and fearful.

At the same time a new group of men appeared in the highlands. They were part of the new professional middle class created by the industrial revolution, and they soon came to dominate mountain society. Lawyers, bankers, and businessmen sought to bring the discipline and rationalized work processes of industry into the mountains. These new leaders and values threatened the individuality that many mountaineers prized. Often conflict between the two groups seemed to have no immediate basis. To

the professional middle class, the rural inhabitants and their life style represented an anachronism that had to be reformed. On the other hand, many people in the highland regions felt that the changes brought by industry could be halted only by violence. The conflicts generated by confrontations between these two groups were based on the failure of either to understand the motivations of the other.

The attempt to bring the order demanded by industrialization to Appalachian society was fiercely resisted. When one faction of a Virginia feud objected to the interference of the court in a dispute, the men shot to death the judge, the prosecutor, the sheriff, and three of the jurors.⁴¹ Kentucky Governor William O. Bradley was forced to send the state militia into Clay County in 1898 when a feud had destroyed all semblance of law and order in the area.⁴² In western North Carolina the sheriff of Mitchell County was killed in a street fight trying to restrain a local trouble maker.⁴³ This case gained great notoriety because the officer was the brother of one of the state's U.S. senators. A large number of federal Internal Revenue officials were attacked as they attempted to enforce the tax laws.⁴⁴ Even the act of supporting the authorities was sufficient reason for some mountaineers to take offense. A newspaper editor in Pulaski County, Kentucky, J. R. Rucker, denounced lawlessness in an editorial in 1892. His reward for this violation of community solidarity was to be shot and killed by an irate reader.⁴⁵ The new middle class in Appalachia was appalled by this reactionary violence. A Virginia editor reacting to an attack on an industrial site characterized the perpetrators as "Mountain outlaws, the riff-raff of civilization, barbarians...."⁴⁶ The rural inhabitants of the highlands knew that many of the new leaders felt this way and deeply resented it.

The incident that best illustrates the conflict between these two groups in Appalachia is the lynching and riot that took place in Roanoke, Virginia, in September 1893. Roanoke was a predictable location for this type of confrontation. In the late 1870's the area contained a few hundred people and was named Big Lick. The convergence of railroad lines created a boom town that adopted the more dignified name of Roanoke. The mountain people from the surrounding counties came to work in the iron mills that formed the economic backbone of the growing community.⁴⁷ By 1893 the population of the city had reached approximately 25,000, and Roanoke was ready to explode. With a much larger black population than most of Appalachia, the city experienced substantial racial tension. In addition the severe financial collapse in the United States in 1893 struck Roanoke hard,⁴⁸ and unemployed workers blamed the business leadership of the city for their plight. All that was needed to set the city ablaze was an

incident that would allow the mountain men to focus their fears on one object.

That spark was supplied on September 20, 1893. An unemployed black, Thomas Smith, robbed and beat a white woman who had come to town to sell goods raised on her farm. The customary sequence of events would have led to an immediate lynching. But that did not happen in Roanoke. Mayor Henry S. Trout was a local industrialist and banker and a member of the new middle class. Trout was determined to insure that this case be handled through the regular judicial process, and that a mob would not be allowed to take over the city.⁴⁹ The mayor's objective ran counter to the desires of the disgruntled unemployed and the many rural inhabitants in the city that day. A confrontation between the old and the new in Appalachia was inevitable.

The fugitive was quickly located and arrested. Soon the differences began to appear. The regular police were sympathetic with the gathering mob and had made no attempt to apprehend Smith. Instead, detective William G. Baldwin made the arrest and brought the fugitive through the crowd to the jail. Baldwin viewed himself as a professional law enforcement officer and held the excited populace in contempt. He even threatened to shoot anyone who tried to interfere with his work.⁵⁰ Once the prisoner was in jail a mob gradually surrounded the building. Alarmed public officials called out the local unit of the state militia and ordered them to clear the streets. They were able to do so briefly, but by nightfall the crowd grew again until it numbered at least 1,500 people.⁵¹ The mayor, the local judge, and the district attorney all assured the people that since the court was already in session justice would be swift in this case.

The problem that these men faced, however, was that the mob was not interested in official justice. The idea of using institutions instead of individual action to regulate society was foreign to most mountaineers. Each man felt he had to protect his family and his community's values by personally taking direct action. A group of approximately fifty men who lived in the country near the injured woman's home began to attack an unprotected side of the jail. These men refused to believe that the authorities would use force against them and ignored repeated warnings issued by the militia leader.⁵² In the confusion that followed, the militia opened fire on the mob which regrouped and charged again. The militia fired again and the crowd quickly left the jail. Eight civilians were dead and more than a score were wounded, including the mayor.⁵³ Although driven away from the jail, the mob refused to disperse and indeed their resentment only increased.

The object of their hatred turned from the Negro to the government officials who had demanded that due process be followed. The mayor

became the object of special concern. Mob leaders searched his home and the major hotel in Roanoke in a vain attempt to locate Trout and lynch him. A state senatorial candidate who called for peace was shot at three times and was forced to flee.⁵⁴ The situation was clearly out of control, and the prisoner was removed from the jail and the militia was disbanded in an effort to placate the hostile population. Even after the police betrayed the prisoner the next morning and he was lynched, the mob remained in control of the city.⁵⁵ Personal revenge was still their major motivation and only the most strenuous efforts prevented them from burying the lynched black man in the mayor's front yard.

Appalled by the events, the professional leadership of Roanoke sought to regain control of the city. The leader in this effort was Joseph H. Sands, vice-president of the Roanoke Iron Works, who helped create a special citizens committee.⁵⁶ Sands was able to call together fraternal organizations and workers' groups and persuade them to support efforts to suppress the existing anarchy. Resentment against the authorities still remained, as the following resolution adopted by one meeting indicates:

Resolved, that, it is the opinion of this meeting, the firing upon the crowd assembled about the courthouse was not justified by existing circumstances and was in a great measure unprovoked, and we hereby demand from the proper authorities that a most rigid investigation be made of all the circumstances of the affair, and that, in case the guilt of any official, civil or military, be proved, that said officer shall be requested to resign, and that he be punished to the full extent of the law....⁵⁷

The committee worked carefully and was able to avoid provoking further incidents. A week after the riot Mayor Trout was able to return to town from his self-imposed exile, and the militia was able to meet without any outside interference.

The city officials moved swiftly to punish those who had led the mob. They realized that Roanoke's tarnished reputation would be a hindrance to further business growth, and they worked hard to restore the city's respectability. A thorough public investigation took place which served as a forum to vindicate the policies pursued by the public officials. A special grand jury was called and nineteen indictments were handed down against the rioters. Significantly, two of those indicted were police officers who were charged with aiding the mob with the lynching of Smith.⁵⁸ Unfortunately for the middle-class leadership, the cases were tried before juries made up of mountain men who accepted personal revenge as a routine practice. The result was that most of those indicted were convicted, but the jury's sentences were so light as to constitute no punishment at all.⁵⁹ The local newspaper protested that the verdicts were "travesties upon justice."⁶⁰ The lack of understanding between the two groups within mountain society that created the conditions for the riot remained unchanged. The tension evident in Roanoke would be found throughout Appalachia, and other violent outbreaks would testify to the continuing con-

flict between the traditional mode of living and industrialization in the region.

This survey of violence in the Southern mountains in the 1890's leads to an important conclusion about the inhabitants of the area. Although there was a high level of social conflict in the 1890's, the mountain people are inherently no more violent than any other group of Americans.⁶¹ The causes of the feuds and riots can be much more adequately explained by an unusual convergence of social forces than by speculations about some theoretical mass personality. The mountaineers were suddenly overwhelmed by forces they could not control. Racism, the Civil War, the industrial revolution, and the loss of power to run their own political organizations and communities left the mountaineers angry and frightened. No other group in the history of the United States has faced such an onslaught in such a short period of time. The wonder is not that the people of Appalachia were violent in the 1890's, but that they were not even more violent than they were.

NOTES

¹John Fox, Jr., "The Southern Mountaineer," *Scribner's Magazine*, 29 (May 1901), 562-3.

²Harry M. Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1962), 153-205.

³*Ibid.*, x.

⁴The most complete account of this famous feud is Virgil C. Jones, *The Hatfields and the McCoys* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1948).

⁵See John A. Waits, "Roanoke's Tragedy: The Lynch Riot of 1893" (M.A. thesis, University of Virginia, 1972).

⁶See Thomas D. Clark, "The People, William Goebel, and the Kentucky Railroads," *Journal of Southern History*, 5 (February 1939), 34-48.

⁷Out-of-state reaction is catalogued in the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, February 1-7, 1900.

⁸Jones, *Hatfields and McCoys*, 5; Mary Verhoeff, *The Kentucky Mountains* (Louisville: John P. Morton & Company, 1911), 33; R.L. McClure, "Mazes of a Kentucky Feud," *Independent*, 4 (September 17, 1903), 2217-18; "Hanging of Bad Tom Smith," *Harper's Weekly*, 39 (August 10, 1895), 748.

⁹For a discussion of the ethnic composition of the mountain population see Cratis D. Williams, "The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction: Who Are Southern Mountaineers?" *Appalachian Journal*, 3 (Autumn 1975), 11-19.

¹⁰Frost, "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains," *Atlantic Monthly*, 83 (March 1899), 316; Frost, "The Southern Mountaineer," *Review of Reviews*, 21 (March 1900), 306; Fox, "Southern Mountaineer," *Scribner's*, 562-3.

¹¹Jones, *Hatfields and McCoys*, 14; Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 46-51.

¹²One Union officer reported: "...many families in this valley who have fathers and brothers in the Union Army...are absolutely starving. This morning a widow with five children at home to support, and her only grown son in the Union Army, came to my quarters begging for food, stating she had eaten nothing for three days. From the ravenous avidity with

which she devoured food set before her, all credited her tale." *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. and index (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. 31, Pt. 3, 446. Hereinafter cited as *Official Records*.

¹³Ibid., 507-8.

¹⁴Thomas W. Humes, *Report to the East Tennessee Relief Association* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Relief Association, 1865).

¹⁵For example see Henry T. Shanks, "Disloyalty to the Confederacy in Southwestern Virginia, 1861-1865," *North Carolina Historical Review*, April 1944, 118-44; John G. Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1963), 240-1; *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. 39, Pt. 1, 234.

¹⁶Lizzie Pickens (?) to Rufus Lenoir, September 21, 1862, Thomas Lenoir Papers (Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.); Barrett, *Civil War North Carolina*, 185-6; Thomas W. Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of East Tennessee* (Knoxville: Ogden Brothers and Company, 1888), 138-9.

¹⁷Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 48.

¹⁸Humes, *Loyal Mountaineers*, 392.

¹⁹Petition of Elizabeth Flearter to E. F. Senter, March 18, 1884, Leonard Campbell Houk and John Chiles Houk Papers (McClung Historical Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tenn.).

²⁰Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 273.

²¹See Gordon B. McKinney, "The Mountain Republicans and the Negro," *Journal of Southern History*, 41 (November 1975), 493-516.

²²Wytheville *Dispatch*, October 23, 1891.

²³John B. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, January 1, 1894, Oliver Perry Temple Papers (University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville, Tenn.).

²⁴For the most complete account see A.C. Hutson, Jr., "The Coal Miners' Insurrections of 1891 in Anderson County, Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 7 (1935), 103-21; Hutson, "The Overthrow of the Convict Lease System in Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 82-102.

²⁵Minutes, Blount County Republican Mass Meeting, October 5, 1891; S.D. Moore et al. to John P. Buchanan, August 15, 1892; John C. Houk to E.C. Prescott, September 21, 1892; Houk to R.M. Lindsay, January 11, 1893; W.W. Lindsay to Houk, March 17, 1894 (Houk Papers).

²⁶Wheeling *Intelligencer*, March 1-9, April 24-28, May 29-June 13, 1894.

²⁷"Vigilante Movements (as distinguished from ephemeral lynch mobs) are thus identifiable by two main characteristics of (1) regular (through illegal) organization and (2) existence for a definite (though possibly short) period of time." Richard M. Brown, "The American Vigilante Tradition," in Hugh D. Graham and Ted R. Gurr, eds., *Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1969), I, 123, 171-80.

²⁸Tonnies, *Community & Society*, trans. and ed. Charles P. Loomis (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 42-4, 64-7, 76-8.

²⁹Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 11-75, 133-63.

³⁰Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1965), 23.

³¹Ibid., 24.

³²Statesville *Landmark*, January 18, 1898.

³³Middlesborough *News*, June 30, 1900.

³⁴Clinton *Gazette*, July 13, 1898.

³⁵William J. Crotty, James F. Kirkham, and Sheldon G. Levy, *Assassination and Political Violence: A Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970), 24.

³⁶In February 1890 newspaperman Charles E. Kincaide shot former Kentucky Democratic Congressman William P. Taulbee. Kincaide had exposed Taulbee's adulterous relationship with a government clerk and ended Taulbee's political career. The shooting was the climax of a continuing personal and political battle between the two men. *Wheeling Intelligencer*, March 1, 1890; *London Mountain Echo*, March 7, 1890. Former Virginia Republican Congressman James A. Walker was seriously wounded in March 1899 while collecting evidence to challenge the election of the Democratic candidate. After a heated verbal exchange, Walker wounded W.S. Hamilton, the lawyer for the opposition. Walker was in turn shot by G.D. Davis, a secretary recording the testimony for the Democrats. *Clinton Gazette*, March 15, 1899; *Big Stone Gap Post*, March 16, 1899. Republican Congressman David G. Colson was wounded twice in two separate incidents involving the same individual. The first confrontation between Colson and Ethelbert D. Scott took place after both joined the army to fight in the Spanish-American War. The second shooting took place in January 1900 just before the assassination of Democratic gubernatorial contestant William Goebel. Scott, apparently drunk, verbally abused Colson. In the confusion that followed, Colson shot and killed Scott and in turn was severely wounded. *Middlesboro Record*, January 19, 1900; *Hazel Green Herald*, January 18, 1900.

³⁷For the trials of the assassins see *Hazel Green Herald*, August 23, October 4, 1900.

³⁸See Gordon B. McKinney, "The Mountain Republican Party-Army," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 32 (Summer 1973), 124-39; McKinney, "The Rise of the Houk Machine in East Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 45 (1973), 61-77.

³⁹See McKinney, "Farewell to the Bloody Shirt: The Decline of the Houk Machine," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 46 (1974), 94-107.

⁴⁰See Wiebe, *Search for Order*, 133-63.

⁴¹Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 49.

⁴²Louisville *Courier-Journal*, June 13, 1898.

⁴³Wytheville *Dispatch*, September 3, 1897.

⁴⁴A typical incident was reported as follows: "While he was doing this [destroying the still], a man came into the distillery who appeared to be the owner, and Mr. Bouldin attempted to place him under arrest, but he escaped from the premises, returning in a few minutes with a double-barreled shot gun, and fired the contents of both barrels into the body of Mr. Bouldin, inflicting very severe wounds in his left arm and his side in the region of the heart." John W. Mason to B.H. Bunn, March 4, 1892, letterbook, John W. Mason Papers (University of West Virginia Library, Morgantown, W. Va.).

⁴⁵Maryville *Times*, September 28, 1892.

⁴⁶Big Stone Gap *Post*, April 24, 1891.

⁴⁷Waits, "Lynch Riot," 22-3.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 25-6.

⁴⁹Roanoke *Times*, September 23, 1893.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, September 21, 1893.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²*Ibid.*, September 23, 1893.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, September 22, 1893.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, September 23, 1893.

⁵⁷Ibid., September 22, 1893.

⁵⁸Ibid., October 24, 1893.

⁵⁹Ibid., November 23, 26, 1893; Waits, "Lynch Riot," 70.

⁶⁰Roanoke *Times*, November 26, 1893.

⁶¹For example in the period between 1879 and 1908 there was more political violence in all of America—not just Appalachia—than at any time since 1800. Sheldon G. Levy, "A 150 Year Study of Political Violence in the United States," in Graham and Gurr's *Violence in America*, I, 67.

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Literary Traditions and Folklore

The Observance of Old Christmas in Southern Appalachia

CHESTER RAYMOND YOUNG

Two generations ago in Southern Appalachia many people regularly kept Old Christmas or had a vivid memory of descriptions of its observance which they had heard recounted by their forebears. Since then, however, this Southern tradition has given way to what mountain people at the turn of the century called the "man-made" New Christmas of December 25.¹

The year 1753 marked the first Old Christmas in the English-speaking world. It developed immediately as an aversion toward Britain's calendar reform. The British Parliament adopted in 1751 the Gregorian calendar, which had already been in effect in Roman Catholic lands on the Continent for 170 years. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII had given up the Julian calendar, in use in the Roman Empire since 45 B.C. The Julian calendar had been based on the assumption that a solar year equalled 365 1/4 days; accordingly, a day had been intercalated at the end of February in each year which was a multiple of 4. Thus 3 common years had been followed by 1 leap year. This pre-Christian adjustment of the Romans' ancient calendar had been fairly accurate, but even so a Julian year had been too long by 11 minutes 14 seconds, or a day in 128 years. (Scholars calculate that the sun in its supposed journey northward crosses the equator once every 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes 46 seconds.)

By 1582, therefore, the calendar had outrun the sun by 10 days. The new papal calendar corrected this solar imbalance by dropping the 10 days of October 5-14 that year. To care for future discrepancies the intercalations were to be omitted on all centenary years except those which are evenly divisible by 400. In other words, only 97 of the 100 Julian leap years during 4 centuries would be retained under the Gregorian calendar.²

When the Pope's calendar went into effect in 1582 in parts of Europe, Englishmen, having achieved a reformation of religion on their own island, had been in no mood to accept the new papal timekeeping scheme. As a result of their recusancy, they had continued to use the Julian calendar until 1752. By then the difference between the two styles was eleven days, because the year 1700 had been a leap year under the Julian calendar but not under the Gregorian. To correct this accumulated disproportion

the eleven days of September 3-13 were omitted from the year 1752. To provide for future symmetry, the Gregorian intercalary rule was adopted. The act of Parliament also moved New Year's Day from March 25 to January 1.³ By September 14, 1752, the necessary changes had been effected, and for the first time since October 4, 1582, the calendar in Britain was even once more with the calendar, say, in Spain.

Henceforth anniversaries and holidays in the British world actually fell eleven days sooner in the year than they had occurred under the Julian calendar—or Old Style (O.S.), as that system of dating came to be called. Because Christmas (December 25) under the Gregorian calendar—or New Style (N.S.)—now came eleven days earlier in the season, some people felt it was necessary to add that number of days to a Julian date in order to find when that event should rightly occur under the new calendar. Accordingly, January 5, N.S., corresponded to December 25, O.S. If a man objected to the new calendar and wanted to keep Christmas at the same time of the year it had previously been observed, he celebrated the Nativity on January 5 during the remainder of the eighteenth century and called it Old Christmas to distinguish it from New Christmas—December 25, N.S. (Beginning with 1801 and continuing through 1900, Old Christmas took place on January 6. The date advanced one day during that century because 1800 was a leap year under the Julian calendar but not under the Gregorian. And for the same reason Old Christmas fell on January 7 after Leap Year's Day in 1900. It will continue to occur on January 7 through 2000.)⁴

And some Englishmen did object to the new calendar and especially to its shift in the dating of Christmas. In order to test the authenticity of the new date a "vast concourse of people" in Somersetshire gathered at the famous Christmas-flowering thorn at Glastonbury on Christmas Eve 1752, N.S.,

but to their great disappointment, there was no appearance of its blowing, which made them watch it narrowly the 5th of Jan. the *Christmas-Day*, Old-Style, when it blow'd as usual.⁵

This plant, which actually blooms twice a year (in the spring and for a brief time around January 5, N.S.),⁶ was proof enough to the people of Somerset that nature did not yield to Parliamentary act.

Also at the village of Quainton in Buckinghamshire a throng of more than two thousand assembled on December 24, 1752, N.S., to inspect a black thorn

which was remembered (this year only) to be a slip from the famous *Glastonbury* thorn, that it always budded on the 24th, was full blown the next day, and went all off at night: but the people finding no appearance of a bud, 'twas agreed by all, that *Decemb. 25 N.S.* could not be the right *Christmas-Day*....⁷

The parishioners, refusing to go to church the following day, let it be known

that they would celebrate the Nativity on January 5. So steadfast were they in this opinion that the ministers of neighboring villages prudently announced that "the old *Christmas-Day* should be kept holy as before."⁸ Here is probably the earliest account of a proposed observance of Old Christmas.

In one unidentified Anglican parish, the Reverend Francis Blackburne opened his church on Friday, January 5, 1753—the first Old Christmas Day—to a congregation which filled the building. The people were sorely disappointed, however, when the rector did not use the service designated for Christmas Day but instead, like a crusading clergyman of the twentieth century, preached a sermon on the virtue of obeying the Calendar Act of 1751.⁹

Some people in western England, reluctant to accept the Gregorian calendar, persisted in keeping Old Christmas for three or four generations. In fact, in the county of Somerset remnants of this observance were still found in the early part of the twentieth century.¹⁰

It may seem that Old Christmas originated in the Feast of the Epiphany,¹¹ which falls on January 6—twelve days after Christmas Day. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Epiphany vied with the Feast of the Nativity (December 25) as the proper occasion for fixing the date of Christmas. When December 25 had won out over other dates and events, the Twelve Days of Christmas developed perhaps as an effort to connect Nativity and Epiphany by an extended period of festivities. In fact the practice was very ancient in England, probably going back to the time of King Alfred. The coinciding of Epiphany with Old Christmas during the nineteenth century apparently gave a new impetus to the keeping of the latter event and undoubtedly prolonged its existence in England. The origin of Old Christmas, however, was distinct from the celebration of Epiphany. In parts of western England where the Old-Christmas tradition was more deeply ingrained, Old Epiphany was also kept during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The date was January 17—twelve days after Old Christmas.¹²

When Old Christmas made the transit from England to British North America is not known, but its observance became well ensconced during the nineteenth century in the fastnesses of the Southern highlands, which were especially suitable for the preservation of such a custom related to the Nativity. In time the keeping of it became a mixture of both the sacred and the secular. Some participants who recorded their experiences distinguished Old Christmas as either a religious event or a festive occasion, but most of them pictured its eclectic character. When Joe Creason described in 1970 an Old-Christmas party he had attended more than two decades earlier at the home of an aged couple on Hell-fer-Sartin Creek in

Leslie County, Kentucky, he remembered the reading of the Christmas account from the Scriptures, the exchanging of gifts around a cedar tree decorated with apples and strings of popcorn, the serving of a wassail bowl, and the recounting of Old-World tales which the thirty some people who were present had heard from their ancestors.¹³

On the other hand, May Ritchie Deschamps recalled in 1930 that Old Christmas, as kept around the turn of the century in her childhood home on Clear Creek in Knott County, Kentucky, was "more of a religious time" than the December Christmases of her later years. "On Old Christmas Eve," she recollected, "we'd sit fore the fire and Mom and Dad and Granny'd tell us about the baby Jesus born in a stable on this night...."¹⁴ Jean Thomas, dauntless traveler of the Appalachians, similarly characterized Old Christmas as a pious occasion marked by prayer and caroling.¹⁵

In the religious nature of Old Christmas the use of carols played an important part. The most common of these folk songs was "The Cherry-Tree Carol," which an aged woman in Southern Appalachia called "the touchinest ballet of them all."¹⁶ This carol, sometimes entitled "Joseph and Mary," derives from the apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, which recounts a miracle that occurred on the third day of Joseph's flight into Egypt. Mary had become exhausted by the hot sun as she and her husband rode through the desert. Upon seeing a palm tree, she desired to stop and rest under its shade. Seated beneath the tree, she discovered that it was loaded with fruit. Mary wished aloud that she could have some of it. Joseph replied: "I wonder that thou sayest this, when thou seest how high the palm tree is; and that thou thinkest of eating of its fruit. I am thinking more of the want of water, because the skins are now empty, and we have none wherewith to refresh ourselves and our cattle." The child Jesus, who was being held by his mother, commanded the palm: "O tree, bend thy branches, and refresh my mother with thy fruit." Straightway the tree bent its top down to the feet of Mary. The parents then picked all the fruit from it, ate of it, and were given new strength. Not until Jesus spoke again did the tree resume its original position: "Raise thyself, O palm tree, and be strong, and be the companion of my trees, which are in the paradise of my Father; and open from thy roots a vein of water which has been hid in the earth, and let the waters flow, so that we may be satisfied from thee." At these words, the palm regained its height and a stream of cool water sprang forth from its roots. Joseph and Mary were very happy to have water for themselves and their animals.¹⁷

As this story moved northward to England the tree and its fruit, changing with the latitude, became in turn the fig, the apple, and the

cherry. In British accounts the tree is usually a cherry. Generally Jesus commands the tree from his mother's womb; else he appears supernaturally on her lap to do so.¹⁸

The cherry-tree account appears in one of the so-called Coventry mystery plays of fifteenth-century England. The drama pictures Joseph and Mary on their journey to "Bedleem" to pay his tax. Mary inquires of her "swete husbond" about the kind of tree she has spotted on a hill. He tells her that it is a cherry tree, which at the proper season would bear fruit to satisfy her craving. All at once the tree turns into full bloom, and then as quickly Mary sees cherries growing upon it. Because the tree is so high, Joseph reasons that it would not be easy to gather this fruit for her. Then in a pet he chides her to "lete hy' pluk yow cheryes, be gatt yow with childe." Therefore, the Virgin calls on the Lord to grant her this boon. When the tree bows down to her she gives thanks. Then in contrition Joseph confesses that he has offended God by speaking such unkind words to his spouse, who indeed is carrying "ye kyngys son of blys."¹⁹

When Francis James Child issued his magnificent collection of 305 British ballads nearly a century ago, he included four versions of "The Cherry-Tree Carol," listed as No. 54. The first two of these versions are closely parallel except that the second includes a five-stanza description of Christ's Nativity which is not in the first. At times this description appears as a separate song entitled "Joseph and the Angel." Child's first two renderings show Joseph as an old man, walking in a garden or an orchard. They conclude with Mary's asking Jesus to tell her "what this world will be." He answers with a prophecy of His death and Resurrection.²⁰

In the course of time "The Cherry-Tree Carol" made its way from the British Isles to the Appalachian mountains, where numerous renderings have been found. Early in the present century Jean Thomas discovered at least three versions in the Big Sandy Valley of Kentucky.²¹ In the childhood home of Jean Ritchie in Perry County, Kentucky, this song was sung three or four separate ways. Her favorite version is the one her cousin Jason Ritchie taught her. He characterized this carol as

that'n about Mary and Joseph and the argument over that cherry tree[.] Well that's a kind of a quare song, little story I guess never got printed in the Bible, but it got *told* by a whole lot of folks, and might be true, don't you know!²²

Jason Ritchie's version is very similar to that of Jilson Setters, which Jean Thomas recorded in the Big Sandy Valley. The former contains a stanza about Joseph's slighting of Jesus which is missing from the latter.²³ The people of a community on Laurel Mountain in eastern Kentucky also knew at least three different ways to sing "The Cherry-Tree Carol."²⁴

The unique aspect of this ancient folk song is that the advocates of Old Christmas used it subtly to promote their cause. As in the case of all true

folk ballads, the evolution of "The Cherry-Tree Carol" has been a continuing and lively process. Sometime before the twentieth century, singers who may have been Appalachian residents turned the question which Mary asks of Jesus in regard to "what this world will be" into a query which Joseph puts to the unborn baby. Taking "Mary all on his left knee," he inquires when the birthday will be. Jesus responds:

On the sixth day of January
My birthday shall be,
.....
When the stars and the elements
Shall tremble with glee.²⁵

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Bill "Kitchen" Isom, an advocate of Old Christmas whose rendering of this carol Jean Thomas recorded in Carter County, Kentucky, gave the "wind up of it" in these words:

'Twas on the sixth day of January
Angels did sing;
And the shepherds drew nigh
Their gifts for to bring.²⁶

Still another method of injecting balladry with the Old-Christmas theme is found in a western Virginia rendering of the carol "Joseph and the Angel." After describing the birth of the Christ, the angel sings:

On the sixth of January his birthday shall be,
when the stars and the mountains shall tremble with glee.²⁷

The well-known hymn "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning," written by Reginald Heber in 1811, was the favorite Christmas carol of Jean Ritchie's grandmother (1844-1940). On Old Christmas Eve in her later years she customarily sang this carol in the home of her son. As she sat before the fireplace, she sang of the infant Redeemer:

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and monarch and king of us all.²⁸

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To the people of Southern Appalachia the celebration of Old Christmas meant not only singing carols but also watching animals in acts of veneration. As recently as 1966 a Welsh family in Knott County, Kentucky, still visited its stables on Old Christmas Eve to see if the animals were keeping the birth of Jesus.²⁹

The belief that domesticated animals at the stroke of midnight on Old Christmas Eve get down on their knees in adoration of the Christ Child developed in time as an attitudinal hallmark of those persons who were favorably disposed toward the Julian calendar and who thus flew in the

face of astronomy, physics, and science in general. The association of animals, especially the ox and the ass, with the Nativity goes back to the very beginning of Christmas. To justify the inclusion of beasts in the natal scene, early Christians invoked the prophecy of Isaiah: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib."³⁰ Thus quite naturally they pictured Mary riding a donkey to Bethlehem, the oxen standing reverently at the manger, and the Magi traveling on camels. Such animals became then a part of the tangled web of the received tradition concerning Christ's birth. Proponents of Old Christmas regarded adoration by animals as a means to identify the correct day on which to solemnize the Nativity.

Maude Minnish Sutton of Caldwell County, North Carolina, recorded the experience of a man who crossed Grandfather Mountain on an Old Christmas Eve probably early in this century:

It was bitter cold and the fog had froze on the pines and balsams till every leaf was inch deep in rime. 'Twas a full moon and purt nigh clear as day at 12 o'clock. I was drivin' two yoke of cattle and a-goin' East. Jest at midnight them steers all stopped. I hollered at 'em, fur I'd forgot the time. They never paid no attention to me. Old Buck, the head steer, dropped on all four of his knees and all the others done the same thing. They stayed right there still on their knees five minutes, and I stood thar a-feeling right plum weak.³¹

The belief that animals kneel to pray at Old Christmas has been found also in Alexander³² and Guilford³³ counties of the same state; in Campbell County, Tennessee;³⁴ and in Knott,³⁵ Laurel,³⁶ and Leslie³⁷ counties, Kentucky. In some parts of Appalachia there is the general notion that animals, especially cattle, are endowed with the power of speech at midnight as Old Christmas begins. A rare report came from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, that horses also are so possessed.³⁸ When cows and horses venerate the Christ Child, according to one ancient grandmother, "It is the sign that this is for truth our Lord's birth night."³⁹

To inspect or gather certain vegetating or blooming flora was another popular practice of Old Christmas Day and the evening preceding it. The most common plants which have been reported were the elder bush, the pokeweed, the hop vine, and the cherry tree. At the base of the elder bush, for instance, a green shoot bearing a white flower would crop out of the cold ground, even through the snow. Early in the present century on one Old Christmas Day Samanthea Wooton of Leslie County, Kentucky, gathered some of these blooms and carried them in to decorate the house.⁴⁰ Pearl Baird of Stinking Creek in Campbell County, Tennessee, recalls that in her youth this plant blossomed at Old Christmas, regardless of how low the temperature dropped.⁴¹ Jean Thomas reports that the older folk of a generation ago in the Blue Ridge held that the blooming of elders was "the sign that January 6th is the real Christmas."⁴²

During the second decade of this century Henry Stockton of Guilford

County, North Carolina, recalled that on "Ol' Christmas" the pokeweed and the hop vine sprouted up well before dawn and went back in after sunrise.⁴³ An elderly woman told Maude Minnish Sutton of Caldwell County, North Carolina:

I've breshed the snow back off'f hops and seen 'em green as they'd be in June on Old Christmas.... An' I've seen the limbs on the cherry tree a bendin' plum to the ground at the same time.⁴⁴

Belief in these phenomena of animate nature descends from an ancient notion that an awareness of the Nativity pervades the whole universe.

In some areas of Southern Appalachia, Old Christmas was ushered in by the ceremonial lighting of a tree,⁴⁵ while in other sections such usage was associated with New Christmas.⁴⁶ In a typical home in the Blue Ridge the family often conducted a religious rite around the hearth on Old Christmas Eve just before the clock on the mantel announced midnight. The aging grandmother began to sing "The Cherry-Tree Carol" and the other generations joined in. Then she handed a homemade candle to the eldest man-child. The boy lighted the taper by using a piece of burning pine wood which his father passed to him. The father lifted the son up to the top of an undecorated pine tree standing in one corner of the room. Then the boy inserted the candle into a holder which had been put on the highest branch. Nothing else was added to the tree. Its lone candle was like the "star of hope that guided the Wise Men to the manger long ago," according to the idea of mountain people.⁴⁷

Abstinence from labor was another means of emphasizing the gravity of Old Christmas. In Guilford County, North Carolina, to refrain from work was one of the principal ways to observe the day. Among the older people, both black and white, this practice prevailed there at least through the first two decades of this century.⁴⁸

The festal ways of keeping Old Christmas, including feasting and gaiety, were not forgotten by Appalachian Southerners. The chief feature was the Christmas dinner at which the board groaned under its load of victuals. Including the best that pantry, cellar, smokehouse, and springhouse afforded, the meal was indeed a symbol of the spirit which bound the family together and expressed the joy of Christmastide. Samantha Wooton of Leslie County, Kentucky, remembered particularly the cooking and serving of food on Old Christmas Day.⁴⁹ Bessie Wyatt Holt, who was born in 1885, recalled that her parents celebrated January 6 in Knox County, Kentucky, with a bountiful meal.⁵⁰

As might be expected in the case of an anniversary so universally celebrated as Christmas, a welter of superstitious folklore has gathered around the event. A good number of these attitudes probably became

associated with Old Christmas during its prominence in Southern Appalachia. One intriguing belief has to do with the prediction of weather by using the kind of weather which prevailed on the Twelve Days of Old Christmas. Dellie Heatherly (b. 1896) of Campbell County, Tennessee, was taught by her mother to use this method. The elder kept a log in which she recorded the weather for each day of the period January 8-19. The day following Old Christmas is January 8,⁵¹ and the weather that day is the type to be expected throughout January, the mother insisted. The weather of the ninth is a portent of February's weather and so on for the rest of Twelve Days. This system had a putative utility for these people. If January 10 (whose weather is an omen of March) had been cold and rainy, they would wait until the end of March before planting early garden crops, such as potatoes. But if January 10 had been a rather warm day, they would begin their early gardening at the first of March. If January 15 and 16 (whose weather foreshadows what is expected in August and September) had been rainy days, they would harvest their crops early, perhaps around the end of July, so as to avoid the bad weather anticipated in August and September. Mrs. Heatherly said, "Lord, honey, my mother went by this just like a preacher goes by the Bible."⁵²

Such a custom is ancient indeed and preceded Old Christmas by centuries. Thomas Kirchmair (1511-1563), a German dramatist, wrote thus regarding Twelfth Day (January 6):

And in these dayes beside,
They iudge what weather all the yeare shall happen and betide:
Ascribing to ech day a month.⁵³

This practice was retained also in some sections of Kentucky and North Carolina well into the present century.⁵⁴

Another prediction often made on Old Christmas Day relates to the abundance or the scarcity of the fruit crop. If the smoke on that day blows northward, there will be no fruit that year; if it blows southward, there will be a plentiful harvest.⁵⁵

The curious belief that water turns to blood at midnight on Old Christmas Eve has been encountered only in North Carolina; the notion that water turns to wine has been found widespread throughout the nation.⁵⁶

The memory of Old Christmas still lingers in the Southern highlands, even though its observance is almost a relic of the past. One notable exception is found in Floyd County, Kentucky, where a public Old-Christmas celebration has been held regularly for the past thirty years.⁵⁷

Old Christmas, a composite of traditions which antedate its beginning, is a part of the agelong attempt by man to understand himself and to ex-

plain the universe and his existence in it. Although born of man's devout faith and of his closeness to nature, this practice cannot now be restored. Even so, the enduring values which it represented during the century and a half of its prominence in Southern Appalachia can be retained and cherished: wonder before the inscrutable, reverence for the divine, regard for the past, joy in living, and hope for the future. Such traits enable a people to surmount hardship and to spend their lives in usefulness and contentment.

NOTES

¹*The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, ed. Newman Ivey White (7 vols.; Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1952-64), I, 224.

²"Calendar," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1949 ed., IV, 569.

³Since a year in Britain had commenced on March 25, this change was achieved by specifying that the day following December 31, 1751, would be designated January 1, 1752 (*Ibid.*, IV, 572).

⁴There is a sense in which one could hold that no further changes in the difference between the two styles need be calculated after 1923, the year when Greece switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian. That nation was the last major European country to adopt the calendar reform of the sixteenth century.

⁵*The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, 23 (Jan. 1753), 49.

⁶William Mair Auld, *Christmas Traditions* (New York, 1931; rpt. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1968), 141.

⁷*The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, 23 (Jan. 1753), 49.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹William Francis Dawson, *Christmas: Its Origin and Associations, Together with Its Historical Events and Festive Celebrations during Nineteen Centuries* (London, 1902; rpt. Detroit, 1968), 237.

¹⁰Thomas George Crippen, *Christmas and Christmas Lore* (London, 1923; rpt. Detroit, 1971), 11, 192, 199.

¹¹The word "epiphany," which is a transliteration of a Greek word meaning "manifestation," is applied to three events in the life of Jesus which showed him to be the Christ and which supposedly took place on the same day of the year—the visit of the Wise Men at Bethlehem, the unusual circumstances which occurred at his baptism in the Jordan, and his turning of water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana. George William Douglas, *The American Book of Days: A Compendium of Information about Holidays, Festivals, Notable Anniversaries and Christian and Jewish Holy Days with Notes on Other American Anniversaries Worthy of Remembrance*, rev. ed. (New York, 1948), 15-16.

¹²Crippen, *Christmas and Christmas Lore*, 199.

¹³"In the Remote Hollows, This Is 'Old Christmas,'" *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Jan. 6, 1970.

¹⁴Jean Ritchie, *Singing Family of the Cumberland*s (New York, 1955; rpt. New York: Oak Publications, 1963), 148.

¹⁵Jean Thomas, *Blue Ridge Country*, American Folkways Series (New York, 1942), 159.

¹⁶Tristram Potter Coffin, *The Book of Christmas Folklore* (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 69.

¹⁷Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Chap. 20, in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325* (10 vols; Edinburgh ed. [New York, 1896]; rpt. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., n.d.), VIII, 376-7.

¹⁸Coffin, *The Book of Christmas Folklore*, 69.

¹⁹Auld, *Christmas Traditions*, 138-9.

²⁰Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. Helen Child Sargent and George Lyman Kittredge (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1904), 98-100, 648. In this one-volume edition only the first two of the four versions are given.

²¹Jean Thomas, *Ballad Makin' in the Mountains of Kentucky* (New York, 1939; rpt. New York: Oak Publications, 1964), 224-6, 227-8, 230-1.

²²Jean Ritchie, *Folk Songs of the Southern Appalachians as Sung by Jean Ritchie* (New York: Oak Publications, 1965), 42.

²³*Ibid.*, 42-3; Thomas, *Ballad Makin' in the Mountains of Kentucky*, 224-6.

²⁴Marie Campbell, *Cloud-Walking*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971), 206.

²⁵Ritchie, *Folk Songs of the Southern Appalachians as Sung by Jean Ritchie*, 42, 43. Jilson Setters sang this stanza in a slightly different way. Thomas, *Ballad Makin' in the Mountains of Kentucky*, 226.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 228.

²⁷Richard Chase, *Grandfather Tales: American-English Folk Tales* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), 9.

²⁸Ritchie, *Singing Family of the Cumberlands*, 150, 151. This hymn, under the title "Star in the East," appears as No. 24 in Sidney Dyer, *Psalmist: A Collection of Hymns and Sacred Songs for the Use of Baptist Churches* (Louisville, Ky., 1853).

²⁹"Jan. 6 Is Christmas in Knott Community," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Dec. 25, 1966.

³⁰Isaiah 1:3.

³¹*Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, VII, 201.

³²*Ibid.*, I, 637.

³³Elsie Clews Parsons, "Notes on Folk-Lore of Guilford County, North Carolina," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 30 (April-June 1917), 208.

³⁴Jackie Donald Walden, Interview with Walter Walden, Duff, Tenn., Dec. 9, 1975. All of the interviews used in this paper are in the collection of the author.

³⁵Ritchie, *Singing Family of the Cumberlands*, 148.

³⁶William Arthur Pemberton, Interview with Fanney Rush, Bush, Ky., Oct. 1970.

³⁷Onzie Gilbert Feltner, Interview with Sarah Jane Lewis Feltner, Hurts Creek, Leslie Co., Ky., Dec. 1970; Chesney Ruth Muncy, Interview with Samantha Wooton, Leslie Co., Ky., Aug. 1973.

³⁸Creason, "In the Remote Hollows, This is 'Old Christmas' "; *Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, VII, 202.

³⁹Thomas, *Blue Ridge Country*, 160.

⁴⁰Muncy, Interview with Samantha Wooton, Aug. 1973.

⁴¹Jackie Donald Walden, Interview with Pearl Baird, Dec. 9, 1975.

⁴²Thomas, *Blue Ridge Country*, 161.

⁴³Parsons, "Notes on Folk-Lore of Guilford County, North Carolina," 208.

⁴⁴*Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, I, 639. See also, *ibid.*, VII, 547, 560.

⁴⁵Thomas, *Blue Ridge Country*, 160.

⁴⁶Ritchie, *Singing Family of the Cumberlands*, 148-50.

⁴⁷Thomas, *Blue Ridge Country*, 160.

⁴⁸Parsons, "Notes on Folk-Lore of Guilford County, North Carolina," 208.

- ⁴⁹Muncy, Interview with Samanthea Wooton, Aug. 1973.
- ⁵⁰Ronald Lee Chastain, Interview with Bessie Wyatt Holt, Jan. 1971.
- ⁵¹Here the mother used the correct date for the twentieth century.
- ⁵²Warren Eugene Heatherly, Interview with Dellie Heatherly, Jan. 1971.
- ⁵³Cited in John Ashton, *A Righte Merrie Christmas!!!: The Story of Christ-tide* ([London], n.d.; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1968), 239.
- ⁵⁴*Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, VII, 223.
- ⁵⁵*Ibid.*, VII, 555, 556.
- ⁵⁶*Ibid.*, VII, 203.
- ⁵⁷"Old Christmas Mountain-Style," *Corbin (Ky.) Times-Tribune*, Dec. 24, 1975.

Versions of "Natural Man" in Appalachia

ROBERT J. HIGGS

In the Appalachian region we claim that we want to preserve a knowledge of the natural person living close to the soil, and hardly a day goes by that we do not hear, understandably, a lament for the passing of a simpler way of life. But what is it we are lamenting and exactly who is this natural person that we wish to remember as we move toward the twenty-first century and more and more artificiality? I submit that the natural person we profess to admire is a many-sided individual with complex and contradictory antecedents. I base this opinion on the conflicting types of the mountaineer in literature and on the diverse images surrounding the national heroes of the region. I am also proceeding on the assumption that literary art, being a distillative process, invariably reflects the *Zeitgeist* of a society, as do the legends surrounding epic heroes. My thesis, then, is that a study of the literature and heroic myths of Appalachia reveals at least three versions of "natural men" who constitute the central paradox in the collective Appalachian personality and who contribute to the confusion of cultural identity; these are (1) natural man as inherently bad as proclaimed by Thomas Hobbes, (2) natural man as innately good as argued by Jean Jacques Rousseau, and (3) the natural aristocrat as described by Thomas Jefferson and epitomized by Henry David Thoreau. The Appalachian personality, being a composite one, cannot be understood until the components are evaluated. Understanding, perhaps, will lead to the cultivation of the best that is in it.

One familiar use of the term *natural* is in I Corinthians 2.14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: Neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Basically the same distinction was made by Thomas Hobbes, who contrasted the condition of "mere nature" in which everyone is at war with everyone else and the law of nature, *lex naturalis*, which he equated with the law of God.¹ To Hobbes (1588-1679), the great defender of royal prerogative, the artificial was much preferable to the natural: "For by art is created the great *Leviathan* called a *Commonwealth*, or *State*, in Latin *Civitas*, which is but an artificial man; though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defense it was intended..." (p. 129). The same rationale was used as one justification for the colonization of America. Says John Smith in 1616 in "A Call to the New

World," "Religion...should move us...to show our faith by our works in converting those poor savages to the knowledge of God...." Another name for these "poor savages" was "the naturals."²

With the beginning of the romantic movement in the eighteenth century those living outside the Leviathan began to be seen in a favorable light, especially by Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788), whose prescription was simple: return to nature, shun society, enjoy solitude. "Rousseau's Nature was not Newton's Nature—a system of matter and motion, ordered by Providence, and established in the human mind by nice mathematical calculations."³ Neither was Rousseau's Nature Hobbes' Nature: "But above all things let us beware concluding with Hobbes, that Man, as having no Idea of Goodness, must be naturally bad; that he is vicious because he does not know what Virtue is; that he always refuses to do any Service to those of his own Species, because he believes that none is due to them....This author [Rousseau] to argue from his [Hobbes'] own Principles, should say that the State of Nature, being that where the Care of our own Preservation interferes least with the Preservation of others, was of course, the most favourable to Peace, and most suitable to Mankind."⁴

A third type of natural man is the natural aristocrat. In a letter to John Adams (Oct. 25, 1813) Thomas Jefferson distinguished between the artificial aristocrat (or *pseudo-aristoi*) and the natural aristocracy and concluded that in a democracy the election of the natural aristocrat is essential. The word *aristoi* means *best*, and the best government would be one based on virtue and talent and not on wealth and birth. Jefferson's tribute to external nature and his defense of freedom link him with Rousseau while his distrust of *human* nature, as reflected in his insistence upon checks and balances in government, is reminiscent of the thought of Hobbes. Jefferson's synthesis of culture and nature is a highly refined and sophisticated philosophy, and while its impact upon America and Appalachia is immeasurable, there is another great American and natural aristocrat who today has more relevance to Appalachia than the immortal Jefferson, though Jefferson was closer to us geographically and a traveler in the mountains. I speak of Henry David Thoreau who merely traveled "a lot in Concord." While we should never turn our eyes away from the author of the Declaration of Independence, we should remember that his views come down to us from a position of privilege. Symbolically there is a vast difference between Monticello and Thoreau's cabin at Walden, and of the two men, Thoreau is more our contemporary.

The three types of natural persons are quite evident in the literature of the frontier and of Southern Appalachia. The Hobbesian idea that man living in a state of nature is depraved has been echoed through the years by observers from William Byrd to Arnold Toynbee, who regarded the Ap-

palachian as the modern "white barbarian," and one message is continually implied: alienation from some royal or federal Leviathan leads to degradation. Hobbes, thus, is continually avenged.

The belief in the natural depravity of man, however, has been quite at home in Southern Appalachia, and reminders of this condition by outsiders have not really been necessary. Sut Lovingood, a native East Tennessean, says he "ain't got no soul" and neither, apparently, has anyone else in Sut's opinion: "Whar thar ain't enuf feed, big childer roots little childer outen the troff, an' gobbils up thar part. Jis' so the yeath over: bishops eats elders, elders eats common peopil, they eats sich cattil es me, I eats possums, possums eats chickins, chickins swallers wums, an' wums am content to eat dus, an' the dus am the aind ove hit all."⁵ As "a nat'ral born durn'd fool" Sut perhaps confirms the psalmist's statement, "The fool has said in his heart, *There is no God*" (14.1), but at the same time he raises the question who is the bigger fool—Sut, who acknowledges his condition, or those of us who refuse to recognize our own predatory ways and pretensions? Thus one interpretation of the *Sut Lovingood Yarns* (1867) is the Christian notion of the world, not as "spacecraft earth" as ecologists like to call our planet, but as a ship of fools, a notion deeply embedded in the Appalachian character and one, on the basis of all evidence, difficult indeed to refute. Through this mountaineer's eyes we see the asininity of the acquisitive culture of his day and of our own, and we also note the Calvinistic belief in the innate depravity of man, what Sut calls "univarsal onregenerit, human nater," which persists in the literature of the Appalachian region as seen in Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, James Dickey's *Deliverance*, and Cormac McCarthy's *Child of God*, to name only a few. While the romance mode may represent some of the best writing on Southern Appalachia, it also perpetuates the myth of the mountaineer as fundamentalist freak, sexual pervert, and necrophiliac—in short, a flawed creature, so flawed that he sometimes begins to appear as the exception rather than the rule, even when the author, Flannery O'Connor, for instance, states otherwise.

Side by side with the natural man with the mark of the beast has been the child of Rousseau. This natural man is at home in the mountains and has little or no regard for the niceties of lowland society. According to David Hunter Strother ("Porte Crayon") writing in 1872,

the mountaineer is born and nurtured in poverty and seclusion. He has no set pattern to grow up by, with none of the stop-shops of civilization at hand to furnish him ready-made clothing, manners, or opinions....

Simple but strong, uncouth but sincere, the man of the mountains knows nothing of the luxury and refinement of cities, and is equally protected from most of their attendant vices and miseries....Without rivalry, he knows little either of envy or ambition; with nothing, he is rich in the independence arising from few and simple wants.⁶

Similar Rousseauistic sentiments can be found in the writings of John Esten Cooke, Philip Pendleton Cooke, and Sidney Lanier, who in *Tiger Lilies* (1867) created the Smallin brothers, one bad and the other good. Gorm is traitorous, treacherous, and vengeful while Cain is "good-natured," "communicative," and the model of rectitude and honor. Thus, the good natural man is an appealing figure of self-reliance and intuitive good sense—a sort of eternal innocent who shows no need of being saved by church, state, or formal education. He achieves demi-god status as Bulkington in *Moby Dick* and as Thomas Wolfe's endearing Nebraska Crane of *The Web and the Rock* and *You Can't Go Home Again*. Basically the same attributes that go to make up this natural man also form the character of the natural woman who in novel after novel of Appalachian life emerges as a pillar of strength, for example, Ivy Ingoldsby in *This Day and Time*, Mother in James Still's *River of Earth*, and the tragic Gertie Nevels in *The Dollmaker*.

The third type of natural person, the natural aristocrat in the manner of Thoreau, has not figured as prominently in the fiction of Appalachia as the other two. To be sure the men and women mentioned above are natural aristocrats of a sort. Like Thoreau they derive strength from the earth, but unlike Thoreau they do not have "other lives to lead." Like Faulkner's Dilsey they endure or when removed too far from the earth, like Antaeus, lose their strength. The novel that best depicts the aristocracy that I have in mind is Wilma Dykeman's *The Far Family* in which Ivy Thurston marries Henry Hudson Courtland, an admirer and follower of Thoreau. When he mentions to Ivy the magic name, she responds:

"Walden?"

"It's a pond where a man named Thoreau lived for a while and wrote a book—"

"Yes, I've seen that book at Uncle Fayte McQueen's."

He appeared surprised and pleased. "How little I know about you and your family." He paused. "You read *Walden* and you'll know why I came to your mountains."⁷

It is interesting to note in this dialogue that while Ivy has seen *Walden* at her uncle's place, she has not read it. She has not had to, a fact that Thoreau would appreciate, but when Courtland sends her a copy, she does read it. His inscription confirms the idea that the Thurstons did not need the book, while he himself did: "To the Thurstons, who know how to suck the very marrow-bone of life. With a stranger's sincere regards, Henry Hudson Courtland" (p. 256). To understand this union between Appalachia and New England, so to speak, one has to look more closely at Thoreau himself. His disenchantment with the culture of America is memorably recorded, and his remark that Harvard "teaches all of the branches of knowledge but none of the roots" illustrates his criticism of education in his time and our own. But we err if we forget that Thoreau was a Harvard graduate, that he was a classicist as well as a naturalist, and that *Walden*

contains a prescription for the social ills of his time. In other words, Thoreau was not critical of civilization on principle as Rousseau seemed to be,⁸ but lamented the quality of the civilization that surrounded him. His statement that "I love the wild no less than the good" does of course illustrate his attraction to the wilderness, but not any more so than his desire for the good. Thus, the marriage of Ivy and Courtland symbolizes the unity of energy and form. It is an affirmation, a hope, and the product of that liaison is Phil, a name which means, appropriately, "love of," in this case love of life. It is refreshing that the spirit of Thoreau has emerged in a number of other works set in or near the Appalachian area, notably Wendell Berry's *The Long-Legged House* and Annie Dillard's *The Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, and clearly in the thought of Jonathan Williams, the Asheville-born poet, who has broadened the definition of the sense of place in a manner that would meet the approval of Henry David Thoreau: "It is what we are talking about when we speak of a person with *ground-sense*. One who is particular and specific and truly cultivated—but not parochial and regionalistic."⁹

The paradoxes in the Appalachian personality become more understandable when the heroes of the area are examined in terms of the myths of the natural person. In every case there are at least two versions which center around the familiar battle between solitude and society, flight and reform, or Rousseau and Hobbes. Says Henry Nash Smith:

The noted Western Baptist minister and gazetteer, John M. Peck, prepared a life of Boone...in 1847 which repeatedly attacked the current conception of the hero as a fugitive from civilization. Peck says that Boone left North Carolina for the Kentucky wilderness because of the effeminacy and profligacy of wealthy slave owners who scorned the industrious husbandman working his own fields. But by the time the biographer interviewed the aged hero in Missouri in 1818, Boone had become aware of an imposing historical mission. Although he had not consciously aimed to lay the foundations of a state or nation, he believed that he had been "a creature of Providence, ordained by Heaven as a pioneer in the wilderness, to advance the civilization and the extension of his country."¹⁰

If Boone was the harbinger of civilization, what type of civilization was it that followed him? The picture is confused to say the least, and while the opinion of Lewis Mumford may be unfair, it is certainly worth noting:

The truth is that the life of the pioneer was bare and insufficient; he did not really face Nature, he merely evaded society....The return to Nature led, ironically, to a denatured environment, and when after the long journey was over, the pioneer became conscious once more of a social obligation, these interests manifested themselves in covert pathological ways, like campaigns to prohibit the cigarette or to prescribe the length of sheets for hotel beds, or to promote institutions of compulsory good fellowship. So much for an experience that failed either to absorb an old culture or create a new one! (pp. 38-39)

Thus in Mumford's view the flight à la Rousseau was a failure as was the effort to form an artificial state of distinction. The score, one infers from

Mumford's estimate, Hobbes O Rousseau O. To whom then should we turn as a social guide? One answer, according to Mumford, is Henry David Thoreau who went to the woods not to live alone but to live simply and who came into the world not to reform it but to live in it. "Thoreau," says Mumford, "knew that the wilderness was not a permanent home for man: one might go there for fortification, for a quickening of the senses,...one returned to Nature in order to become, in a deeper sense, more cultivated and civilized, not in order to return to crudities that men had already discarded" (p. 57). The "suggestions of Thoreau," Mumford adds, "which were to be embodied only after two generations in our national and State Parks, and in projects like Mr. Benton Mackaye's great conception of the Appalachian trail, make the comments of those who see in him only an arch-individualist, half Diogenes, half Rousseau, seem a little beside the point" (p. 58).

If there is confusion concerning the identity of Boone in terms of the natural man, the problem becomes even more compounded when we look at "the king of the wild frontier," Davy Crockett. There are, argues Walter Blair, six Davy Crocketts, at least four of whom center on, in addition to his running battle with Jackson, horse sense and gumption. Depending on the image that pro or anti-Jackson supporters at different times wanted to convey, Crockett was pictured as both bad and good, as clownish, rambunctious, rascally, and vicious, and as dignified, gentlemanly, naturally intelligent, and wise.¹¹ The myths surrounding the conflict between nature and civilization lended support to all the versions.

Having noted some persistent images in fiction and the confusion of the identity of two of the great heroes of the region, what can we say about ourselves today in regard to the myths of the natural person? This is a formidable question, but let me attempt an answer by considering two important forces upon the Appalachian personality, Christian fundamentalism, an old force, and modern technology, a new one.

There is evidence to support Richard Hofstadter's assertion that the fundamentalist view "is essentially Manichean; it looks upon the world as an arena for conflict between absolute good and absolute evil and accordingly it scorns compromises...and can tolerate no ambiguities."¹² The fundamentalist view is also Hobbesian and contrasts sharply with the affirmative secular vision of the natural aristocracy, especially on the matter of original sin, the first basic assumption of fundamentalism. Jefferson's high hopes, memorably challenged in Robert Penn Warren's *Brother to Dragons*, are well known; and Thoreau was the very soul of optimism. Said he, "Though we are on our all fours, let us get up and walk like men." Thoreau's statement may be anti-Calvinist and non-Manichean, but I have always failed to see how it can be regarded as un-Christian except in some

dogmatic sense. That there are things to love in this world, among them nature and the simple life, is the good news that Thoreau has to share, good news that is not antithetical to the Christian gospel of love. Some Christians, of course, would argue that the sin of Thoreau is one of pride, that he relied too much upon self rather than on God, and that, in effect, he was blasphemous to the end. Near his death, an abolitionist friend made some reference to a future life and Thoreau responded, "One world at a time." Then when a pious relative asked if he had made his peace with God, his reply was: "I am not aware that we ever quarreled."¹³ Eschatological considerations aside, there is no doubting that Thoreau's philosophy for living in this world is entirely positive and quite consistent with the traditional mountain virtues of individualism, self-reliance, and pride, though quite at odds with doctrines of reform. His last words speak volumes in this regard. "Moose," he murmured, and "Indians." Implied herein is an attitude of wonder and respect toward the first "naturals," an attitude exactly opposite to that more prevalent attitude which led to their removal or to sterile assimilation.

Another consequence of the fundamental heritage has been anti-intellectualism which throughout America has been fed by many streams. Lest we regard anti-intellectualism in a completely pejorative way, however, we must define the term, to distinguish between intelligence and intellect. According to Hofstadter,

Intelligence works within the framework of limited but clearly stated goals, and may be quick to shear away questions of thought that do not seem to help in reaching them....Intellect, on the other hand, is the critical, creative, and contemplative side of mind. Whereas intelligence seeks to grasp, manipulate, re-order, adjust, intellect examines, ponders, theorizes, criticizes, imagines. Intelligence will seize the immediate meaning in a situation and evaluate it. Intellect evaluates evaluations, and looks for meanings of situations as a whole (p. 25).

Though I would find it impossible to prove, I believe that the Appalachian personality, generally speaking, has been characterized by intelligence rather than by intellect, an intelligence that has won, for example, the admiration of the world in Appalachian arts and crafts. It is an intelligence synonymous with common sense, or "horse sense," and has manifested itself in a religion relatively devoid of ambiguities in the minds of believers.

Today, however, one wonders if it is not time to reassess the importance of intellect vis-à-vis intelligence, especially when we consider the bewildering impact of technology upon the old order. What is technology? As Robert Pirsig points out, "a root word of technology, *technikos*, originally meant 'art'."¹⁴ In a sense, then, a technologist like other artists envisions other worlds and other possibilities, but unlike them sets out to reify his vision. As technologists we are constantly rearranging nature, and

practically all societies are to one degree or another technological. The pioneers, in fact, were primitive technologists. With ax and gun they set out to conquer the continent, reforming nature (and the Indian) and escaping an oppressive order in Europe and the Atlantic seaboard that demanded some sort of social or political conformity. The moral question, we now realize, has never really centered on the use of technology but the degree and the kind. To determine this degree and kind we need intellect as never before. Nothing could presage with more certainty the deterioration of the quality of life than the transference of a blind faith in providence to a blind faith in material progress. The Appalachian personality has exhibited from time to time both misoneism (hatred of the new) and neophilia (love of the new). Neither will work; in the future we must not necessarily guard the old nor embrace the new but seek the best. To do so will require a society that is not only intelligent but intellectual as well.

By way of conclusion of my discussion of the natural man in Appalachia I would like to cite the three formulae advanced by Otto Rank:

These correspond to three different ages, world views, and human types. The first is the Apollonian, *know thyself*; the second the Dionysian, *be thyself*; the third, the Kantian, *determine thyself from thyself*. The first rests on likeness to others and leads in the sense of Greek mentality to the acceptance of the universal ideal....know thyself, in order to improve thyself (in the terms of universal norms). It is therefore, not knowledge for the sake of the self, but knowledge for the goal of adaptation. The second principle (the Dionysian) in contrast to the first, repudiates likeness and the improvement based on it, as it demands the acceptance of what one is anyway....The true self, if it is unchained in Dionysian fashion, is not only antisocial but also unethical, and therefore the human being goes to pieces on it....Here comes in the Kantian *determine thyself from thyself* in the sense of a true self-knowledge and simultaneously the actual self-creation as the first constructive placing of the problem.¹⁵

If these three modes are applied to a chart reflecting the spectrum of personality types in terms of the natural man, the correlations are immediately obvious and advocacy of the natural aristocrat inevitable (See Fig. 1). As much as the natural aristocrats differ from each other they all share a common belief in the necessity of a quality union of mind and nature as exemplified in their writings and lives.

Thus what Rank calls the Kantian mode is the synthesis of head and heart, doing and being, duty and impulse, Apollonian and Dionysian, and the way to freedom, since extremes of liberty and conformity both corrupt. Either the indulgence of the unexamined self or the uncritical acceptance of external modes and styles can lead to nothing but the most deleterious effects for the Appalachian personality. Our choice, it seems to me, is unmistakable, the cultivation of a natural aristocracy, the determination of the best in ourselves from ourselves. The determination of what is best

almost certainly requires a new reverence for intellect which may be no guarantee for character or personal salvation but which must now be regarded as a prerequisite for a future society possessing any semblance of sanity. The Appalachian personality, like Walt Whitman, "contains multitudes," and among the throng are three types of natural men. May the best of these long prevail.

Fig. 1

DIONYSIAN	KANTIAN	APOLLONIAN
Naturalness	Natural Aristocracy	Artificialness
S. Lovingood D. Crockett	P. Henry Jefferson R.H. Lee* Emerson Thoreau Whitman Lincoln	Wm. Byrd Champ Effingham**

*For a fascinating discussion of the natural aristocracy in terms of Henry, Jefferson, and Lee, see William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1963), especially Chapter II, "From Natural Aristocrat to Country Squire."

**For a description of Champ Effingham, see John Esten Cooke, *The Virginia Comedians* (1854; rpt. Ridgewood, New Jersey: The Gregg Press, 1968), 17-18.

NOTES

¹*Leviathan, The English Philosophers from Bacon to Hill*, ed. Edwin A. Burt (New York: Modern Library, 1939), 163, 222. Subsequent references are to this edition.

²Standard advice of the Virginia Company was: "In all your passages you must have great care not to offend the naturals if you can eschew it." D'Arcy McNickle, *The Indian Tribes of the United States* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), 14.

³Lewis Mumford, *The Golden Day* (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), 22. Subsequent references are to this edition.

⁴*Inequality Among Mankind* (1761; rpt. New York: Lenox Hill, 1971), 68-9.

⁵George Washington Harris, *Sut Lovingood Yarns*, ed. M. Thomas Inge (New Haven: College and University Press, 1966), 174-5.

⁶"The Mountains," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 44 (May 1872), 802.

⁷*The Far Family* (New York: Avon Books, 1966), 252. Subsequent references are to this edition.

⁸In discussing their relationships with nature L. Gary Lambert concludes that "when contrasted with Thoreau's...Jean Jacques' involvement in, and affection for, the natural world were indeed only ordinary." "Rousseau and Thoreau: Their Concept of Nature," *Dissertation Abstracts*, 30 (1969), 1988 A (Rice University).

⁹"Thank God They Cannot Cut Down the Clouds," *Laurel Leaves*, 3 (April 1975), 18.

¹⁰Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), 60-1.

¹¹"Six Davy Crocketts," *The Southwest Review*, 25 (1940), 443-62.

¹²*Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 135. Subsequent references are to this edition.

¹³Joseph Wood Krutch, Introduction, *Walden and Other Writings* (New York: Bantam Books, 1962), 19.

¹⁴*Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (New York: William Morrow, 1974), 289-90.

¹⁵*The Myth of the Birth of the Hero and Other Writings* (New York: Random House, 1964), 293-4.

Bringing in the Sheaves

W. AMOS ABRAMS

As a child in the congregation filling to overflowing a Pinetops tobacco warehouse, I joined in many a stirring song. One especially encouraged the converts with these well-known verses:

Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,
Tho' the loss sustain'd, our spirit often grieves;
When our weeping's over, He will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Then followed the repetitive, reassuring and thus convincing chorus in which the congregation joined the choir:

Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

But I did not know what a "sheaf" was—nor what "sheaves" were; hence I was puzzled to understand what we would be bringing in when we had ceased our weeping and received our welcome. In fact it was much later, I think, when I learned that a "sheaf" was but a "bundle of fodder." It was later—much later—when I learned that a "sheaf" was also a "collection of papers tied together."

Having discovered this latter definition, I used it quite frequently during the ten years (1938-1948) of my most active efforts as a collector of ballads and folk songs, both the recorded tunes and also the old manuscripts. Students at Appalachian State Teachers College were very generous in sharing with me their family favorites. Some I would copy for my files; others were left with me as gifts and became valuable additions to my manuscript collection. Upon receiving such a donation my usual expression of gratitude took this form: "I am most grateful to you for bringing in the sheaves." The students readily picked up the words and would say, "Dr. Abrams, my grandmother has a sheaf of old songs tied with a blue ribbon. I'll borrow it from her and bring it to class when I next visit her."

I left Appalachian State Teachers College on August 31, 1946, and came to Raleigh. On Sunday, September 15, 1968, twenty-two years and two weeks after leaving Appalachian, Mrs. Abrams and I were visiting a very popular annual flea market. There we met two of my former Appalachian students, J. C. Folger and Margaret Ray Folger. Mrs. Folger said: "I had hoped you would be here this afternoon, Dr. Abrams, for I

brought with me a sheaf of favorite old songs collected and written down in the late 1890's by two of my aunts who lived just a few miles south of Boone. I want to lend them to you for your examination and enjoyment. They are a part of my inheritance."

I thanked her in the language which she remembered: "I am grateful to you for bringing in the sheaves."

Thus did I come into temporary possession of a much loved collection of favorite folk ballads and love poems—both sweet and sad—concerning which this essay is written. This sheaf of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century manuscripts contains two items which were found among the papers of Mrs. Folger's grandfather, Jeremiah Councill Ray (1847-1931), and twenty-six which belonged to her two aunts, Miss Sallie Ray (1872-1961) and Miss Lelia Ray (1879-1966).

Jeremiah Councill Ray was a former state legislator and he served as a member of the North Carolina Board of Commissioners, State Department of Agriculture, 1897-1902. Miss Sallie Ray was a pioneer teacher in Watauga and Avery Counties, and she and her sister Lelia lived about two miles east of Boone at the old home place. This property has been in the possession of the family since 1788, when it was granted to ancestor Jesse Councill by Samuel Johnston of Chowan, Governor and Captain General and Commander-in-Chief of North Carolina.

The manuscripts themselves are interesting. Some are written with pen and ink, some with pencil, and some are clippings from contemporary magazines and newspapers. Two of the songs were apparently written down by Mr. Ray, father of the two daughters. One manuscript carries this notation: "Jeremiah Ray's song ballad, Oct., the 1st 1866." The others were written down by or for or clipped by or for the two sisters. The handwritten songs are older than the clippings and date from the late 1890's or early 1900's.

The collectors apparently used whatever writing paper happened to be available, rough or slick, and of varying sizes. Four songs are written on ledger book pages, two on official letterhead used by Mr. Ray when he was with the Department of Agriculture, one of which is dated "Sunday Eve, January 2, 1898." Finally, one song, "The Baggage Coach Ahead," appears on letterhead which reads "Southern States Mission, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Headquarters, P.O. Box 103, Chattanooga, Tenn., East Tennessee Conference." The same hand which wrote down the song apparently filled in the blanks on the letterhead with this information: "Elder W. A. Adams; Address: Fountain Green; Telegraph Address: Deseret Telegraph 104; Sampete Co., Utah, Aug. 31, 1900."

But what about the songs? They are made of the stuff found in sheaf after sheaf of family favorites which I have seen and examined as a collector:

social satire, temperance songs, ballads with their origins in Europe, and others indigenous to America and to North Carolina. There are dire warnings to faithful lovers about the fickleness of men, the foibles of mankind, and the utter need of soul salvation. There are folk lyrics, images of arrogant men and haughty women; there are tragedy, comedy, and tales which jerk at the tear glands.

Some of the songs have long been a part of our folk heritage and will be more or less familiar to most; others—certainly a few of them—will be new to many. What they are, however, is this: a collection of some of the favorite tunes and song stories of a father and two daughters who loved them enough to assemble them, tuck them away in an envelope on which they wrote these words: "Song Ballads &c. To be Kept." The purpose of this article, then, is to carry out, at least in part, this solemn mandate.

I have arbitrarily decided to use as a screening device the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, volumes II-V, to determine which songs should only be listed by title, described briefly, and provided with cross-references to the *Brown Collection*, and which songs should be printed just as they appear on the manuscript pages, along with other information found on these pages. In other words, only those not included in the *Brown Collection* are reproduced here.

Songs which Appear in the *Brown* Volumes

1. *Bessie*—Known variously as "The Drunkard's Lone Child" and "The Drunkard's Daughter," this popular sentimental temperance song has been reported from Virginia, the Ozarks, Michigan, and Nebraska. (See *Brown*, III, 10-11, and V, 26-7.)
2. *Billy Grimes*—Widely-known bit of social satire. Two known versions, one short and one long. Texts are quite similar in all versions except for two stanzas in the longer variant which I collected from Mrs. Della Adams Bostic in 1938. (See *North Carolina Folklore Journal*, September 1973, 133-46. See also *Brown*, II, 193-4, and IV, 248-50, which has eight texts.)
3. *The Bridge*—Incomplete and only selected stanzas from Longfellow's well-known poem, "The Bridge," originally entitled "The Bridge Over the Charles River," which appeared in 1845 in *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*. Popular with quartette singers in the early years of the present century.
4. *Cherry Tree Riddle*—Child ballad 46, "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship." Excerpts clipped from the *Asheville Citizen-Times* on Sunday, July 29, 1934, part of a feature story on Mrs. Maude Minnish Sutton and her collection of ballads. Well-known among the older ballads, mostly British. (See *Brown*, II, 48-9, and IV, 25-7.)
5. *Come All You Fair and Tender Ladies*—Only two stanzas, clipped from the *Asheville Citizen-Times*. An incomplete variant of a lovelorn folk lyric generally known as "Little Sparrow."

6. *The Drunkard's Hell*—A very popular drinking song with lurid word pictures to frighten super-boozers and tear-jerking stories of pitiful children. This version lacks the first seven stanzas. At the end of the song appear these names and addresses: "Miss Mollie Cottrell, Deerfield, N.C., Lelia Ray, Horton, N.C., David S. Ray, Hartrault, Tenn."

7. *In the Valley*—A popular favorite with Old Harmony singers. This note appears at the end of the manuscript: "Written June 30, 1901." (See *Brown*, III, 592-3, and V, 335.)

8. *Kitty Wells*—The *Brown* volumes contain thirteen variants of this widely spread favorite, but only one is printed. This song of Negro plantation life, written by Thomas Sloan in the 1860's, is so loved and so popular all over the country that it is now claimed as a "folk song." (See *Brown*, III, 492-4, and V, 275-6.)

9. *The North Carolina Hills*—This song has but one text but it is included as "a piece of patriotism." It was contributed to the collection by O. L. Coffey of Shulls Mills, Watauga County, in 1939. (See *Brown*, III, 477-8.)

10. *The Ship that Never Returned*—Written by Henry C. Work and copyrighted in 1865, this native American ballad has been found in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Michigan, and Virginia. It has been the source of several parodies. Although only one version is printed in the *Brown Collection*, Dr. Brown collected eleven versions of the song. (See *Brown*, II, 507-10, and V, 271.)

11. *Sourwood Mountain*—This text was clipped from the *Asheville Citizen-Times*. It is certainly one of the most popular folk lyrics and dance tunes in the Southern mountains, and has been reported from Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, and Missouri. As a jig tune, it has long been a play-party favorite. One fiddler, Bill Hensley, told the editor of the *Brown Collection* that the song was "composed by blind Wiley Laws from Virginia." (See *Brown*, III, 279-85, and V, 162-6.)

12. *The Tragedy of Laura Foster's Fate*—This song is one of the three native North Carolina ballads resulting from the murder of Laura Foster by Thomas C. Dula in 1866. Written by Thomas Land, this ballad is concerned only with Laura's murder, and it is divided into three parts: (1) The Murder, (2) The Search for the Body, (3) The Resurrection and Inquest. On the back of the last page of this manuscript appear these lines:

R. T. Millsaps, it is his name
And single is his life.
And happy will be the young lady
Th[at] he ever takes for a wife.

For a more complete discussion of this ballad, see *Brown*, II, 703-13, and IV, 324-6.

13. *Widow in a Cottage by the Sea*—The *Brown Manuscripts* contain five versions of this little tear-jerker but only one is printed. It is also reported from Missouri and said to be the work of C. A. White, published in Boston in 1868. It is remembered in North Carolina both in the mountains and on the coast. (See *Brown*, II, 347-8.)

14. *Will You Love Me When I'm Old*—The popularity of this sentimental ditty—for it tells no story—gives it currency as a folk lyric. It definitely belongs to a special type of song which is concerned with some aspect of love between the sexes. It has been reported from Kentucky, Illinois, and Missouri, and it appears six times in the *Brown* volumes. The second stanza has

been lost in this text. (See *Brown*, III, 270-1, and 321-2, and also V, 191-4.)

15. *Young Girls Take Warning*—This fragment was clipped from the Asheville *Citizen-Times*, a report of an interview with Mrs. Maude Minnish Sutton. The four verses, two each from different stanzas, are a part of another folk lyric with wide currency, one of several songs of similar sentiment which borrowed lines from each other without let or hindrance. The classic "On Top of Old Smoky" is a distinguished beneficiary of such borrowing.

Songs which Do not Appear in the *Brown* Volumes

The first two pieces, "Abner, Dean of Angels," and "[Come, Ye Disconsolate]," were found among the papers of Jeremiah Council Ray; the remaining manuscripts and clipped stories from the press belonged to the two sisters, Sallie and Lelia Ray.

ABNER, DEAN OF ANGELS (the condition of the "Clansmen")

Then Abner, Dean of Angels
Raised a point of order, when
A chunk of old red sandstone
Took him in the abdomen.

He smiled a sort of sickly smile;
And curled up on the floor;
And the subsequent proceedings
Interested him no more.

[COME, YE DISCONSOLATE]

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

2. *Here bring your wounded hearts....*

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

3. *Here speaks the Comforter*

Here see the bread of life; see water flowing
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above.
Come to the feast of love; come ever knowing
Earth has no sorrow but heaven can remove.

Jeremiah Ray's
Oct the 1st 1866 Song Ballat

THE BAGGAGE COACH AHEAD

On a dark stormy night as the train rattled on
And the passengers had gone to bed,
Except a young man with a babe in his arms
Who sat with a bowed down head.

The innocent one commenced crying just then
As if its poor heart would break
"Make that child stop its crying," said a man on the train;
For it's keeping all of us awake."

"Put it off," said another, "don't leave it here,
We've paid for our berths and want rest."
But never a word said the man with the babe,
As he fondled it close to his breast.

"O, where is its mother do take it to her,"
A kind lady gently said.
"I wish that I could," was the man's sad reply,
"But she's dead in the (baggage) coach ahead."

Chorus

While the train moved onward
The husband sat in tears,
Thinking of the happiness
Of just a few short years.
Baby's face brings pictures of
A cherished hope that fled.
But baby's cries can't awaken her
In the baggage coach ahead.
Every eye filled with tears as his story he told
Of a life that was faithful and true
Of how he had saved up his earnings for years
Just to build up a home for two,

How heaven had sent them this dear little babe
Their own happy lives to bless,
But in tears he broke down as he mentioned her name
And in sobs tried to tell them the rest.

Every person arose from their seat in the car,
There were mothers and wives on the train,
And they soon had the little one resting in peace,
With no thought of sorrow or pain.

Next morn at the station he bade them goodbye,
"God bless you!" he gently said,
And they all had a story to tell at their homes
Of the baggage coach ahead.

(August 31, 1900)

BALLAD OF PATCHWORK QUILTS

By Debbie G. Nettles

Across a clothesline bathed in sun
Were patchwork quilts of cloth, homespun.

Repeated patterns rare and old—
Stilled art of needlecraft is told:

Recalling life of pioneers
With sorrow, love—with joy or fears.

My grandma sees in retrospect
Life's touching bits the quilts reflect.

"This half-sized Nine Patch lined with red
Was young Tom's, for his trundle bed.

The Sharon's Rose on bone-white ground
Nell pieced while Nate squired her around.

She pieced the Star of Bethlehem
Before lung fever parted them.

The old, old pattern, Brown Bear's Paw,
Was handed down by Great Grandma.

The day the axe smashed Tom's right knee
We had this Bow Tie quilting bee.

While he spent months in hard splint case,
I nursed and pieced the Wild Goose Chase.

This pattern, known as Winding Blades
Recalls red measles—darkened shades.

I worked on Tree of Paradise
When powder burned our Daniel's eyes.

When John sassed Pa and ran away,
This Cross and Crown helped night and day.

The spring when hail destroyed our grain
I busied myself with the Irish Chain.

To passer-by these quilts have charm
As comforters to keep folks warm.

But loving hands that cut and pieced
Brought calm, content, to nerves released.

With pride and faith that labor brings
While wrapping hurts in lovely things.

The Progressive Farmer—October 1951—p. 120

BALLADE OF HIS "YOUNG LADY"

My lady's heart 'twere hard to touch,
And sighs and vows she'd soon repel;
But if she liked one twice as much
One would not like her half as well.
She careth not for sage or swell,
For guardsman stout or poet lean,
Who haunt Parnassus or Paul Mall:
My lady-love is just thirteen.

She loves a rabbit in a hutch
(A fat Aquinas in his cell)
She loves an aged cat, whose clutch
At breakfast-time exerts a spell.
A most ungracious Florizel.
In fact, it's easy to be seen,
Were she at all averse to tell,
My lady-love is just thirteen.

Although she reads the Higher Dutch,
On culture's peaks apart to dwell
She feigns not; nor of things "as such"
Does she discourse, nor parallel
Dante and Dante Gabriel:
Yet she has "views" advanced and keen
On chocolate and caramel, —
My lady-love is just thirteen.

Envoy

Madame, just homage you compel,
Mature, self-conscious, and serene.
One heart alone you cannot quell;
My lady-love is just thirteen.

—*Longman's Magazine* J.B.B. Nichols

THE BRIDE'S FAREWELL

Farewell, Mother, tears are streaming
Down thy pale and tender cheek;
I, in gems and roses gleaming,
Scarce this sad farewell may speak.
Farewell, Mother, now I leave thee;
(Hopes and fears my bosom swell)
One to trust who may deceive me;
Farewell, Mother, fare thee well!

Farewell, Father, thou art smiling—
Yet there's sadness in thy brow;
Winning me from that heart beguiling
Tenderness to which I go.
Farewell, Father, thou didst bless me
Ere my lips thy name could tell.
He may wound who can caress me;
Father, guardian, fare thee well!

Farewell, Sister, thou art twining
'Round me in affection deep,
Wishing joy but ne'er divining
Why a blessed bride should weep.
Farewell, brave and gentle brother,
Thou art more dear than words can tell.
Father, Mother, Brother, Sister!
All beloved ones, fare ye well!

DIAMONDS AND ROSES

In a cot by a mountain
A fair maiden dwelled
With her fond gray-haired father
Who worshipped his child,
But an old man with gold
Came and offered his hand.
He promised her diamonds
And jewels so grand.
But her lover brought naught
But a rose in his hand.
Which did she love best?

Chorus

Diamonds! Roses!
Which did the maiden choose?
Gold or Sweetheart—
Which had she sooner lose?

Oh, how the diamonds sparkle!
How sweet the roses smell!
I cannot make my choice tonight,
For I love them both so well.

It was diamonds and roses
That bid for the love of this innocent child
In her lone mountain home.
It was diamonds that glowed
Like the rich sun's hues
And roses so fragrant, all covered with dew,
Plucked fresh from the bank
Of the streamlet that flowed
Over the dell.

Chorus

She dreamed of her lover
And thought that the one
With diamonds and gold
So cross and unkind.
And her lover with smiles
Came and banished her fears.
He gave her sweet roses
And kissed back her tears.
She loved his so fondly
Through the dark years
She loved the roses best.

Chorus

Diamonds! Roses!
Which did the maiden choose?
Gold or Sweetheart—
Which had she sooner lose?
Oh, how the diamonds sparkle!
How sweet the roses smell!
I cannot make my choice
For I love them both so well.
The dark-haired lover was her choice
For she loved him, oh, so well!

Written on the back of one page of the manuscript copy are the following:

"Earth has no sorrow Silverstone, N.C. Wednesday, November 16, 1890.
Heaven cannot heal."

Written by Sallie Ray, Nov. 15th, 1898

Sallie Ray, Boonè, N.C.

One single thought
Known to be thine own
Is worth a thousand gleaned
Where others have sown

GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK

My grandfather's clock was too tall for the shelf
So it stood ninety years on the floor;
It was taller by half than the old man himself
Though it weighed not a pennyweight more.
It was bought on the morn of the day that he was born
And was always his treasure and pride,
But it stopped short, never to go again,
When the old man died.

Chorus

Ninety years without slumbering—tick—tick—tick—tick,
His life's seconds numbering—tick—tick—tick—tick,
It stopped short, never to go again
When the old man died.

In watching its pendulum swing to and fro
Many hours had he spent while a boy,
And in childhood and in manhood the clock seemed to know
And to share both his grief and his joy.
For it struck twenty-four when he entered the door
With a blooming and a beautiful bride,
But it stopped short, &c.

Chorus

My grandfather said that [of] those he could hire
Not a servant so faithful he found,
For it wasted no time and had but one desire
At the close of each week—to be wound.
It was kept in its place—not a frown on its face—
And its hands never hung by its side,
But it stopped short, &c

Chorus

I'LL BE ALL SMILES TONIGHT, LOVE

I'll deck my brow in roses,
For the loved one may be there—
The gems that others gave me
Will shine within my hair;
And even them that know me
Will think my heart is light;
Though my heart may break tomorrow,
I'll be all smiles tonight.

Chorus

I'll be all smiles tonight, Love,
I'll be all smiles tonight.
Though my heart may break tomorrow
I'll be all smiles tonight.

And when the room he enters—
The bride upon his arm—
I'll stand and gaze upon him
As if he were a charm.
So once he smiled upon her
So once he smiled on me.
They know not what I've suffered,
They'll find no change in me.

Chorus

And when the dance commences,
Oh, how I will rejoice;
I'll sing the songs he taught me
Without a faltering voice

When flatterers come around me,
They will think my heart is light.
Though my heart will break tomorrow,
I'll be all smiles tonight.

Chorus

And when the dance is over,
And all have gone to rest,
I'll think of him, dear Mother,
The one that I love best.
He once did love, believe me,
But now has grown cold and strange.
He thought not to deceive me;
False friends have wrought this change.

Chorus

THE LIGHTHOUSE

High o'er the black-backed Skerries, and far
To the westward hills and the Eastward sea,
I shift my light like a twinkling star,
With ever a star's sweet constancy.
They wait for me when the night comes down,
And the slow sun falls in his death divine,
Then braving the black night's gathering frown,
With ruby and diamond blaze—I shine!

There is war at my feet where the black rocks break
The thunderous snows of the rising sea;
There is peace above when the stars are awake,
Keeping their night-long watch with me.
I care not a jot for the roar of the surge,
The wrath is the sea's—the victory mine!
As over the breadth to the furthest verge,
Onwaving and untired—I shine!

First on my brow comes the pearly light,
Dimming my lamp in the new-born day.
One lone, last look to left and right.
And I rest from my toil—for the broad sea-way
Grows bright with the smile and blush of the sky,
All incandescent and opaline,
I rest—but the loveliest day will die,—
Again in its last wan shadows—I shine!

When the night is black, and the wind is loud,
And danger is hidden, and peril abroad,
The seaman leaps on the swaying shroud;
His eye is on me, and his hope in God!
Alone, in the darkness, my blood-red eye
Meets his, and he hauls his groping line.
"A point to no'ward!" I hear him cry,
He goes with a blessing and still—I shine!

While standing alone in the Summer sun,
Sometimes I have visions and dreams of my own,
Of long-life voyages just begun,
Of rocks unnoticed, and shoals unknown.
And I would that men and women would mark
The duty done by this lamp of mine;
For many a life is lost in the dark,
And few on earth are the lights that shine!
—Good Words

ONLY BEEN DOWN TO THE CLUB

Last night I was out rather late—
'Twas only an innocent spree—
My wife for my coming did wait
When sleeping I thought she would be.
I found her in temper and tears,
"Oh," she cried, "'twas a sin and a shame,"
And scratched both my eyes and my ears,
And I told her I would soon explain.

Chorus

"The club had a meeting tonight, Love;
Of business we had a great sight, Love;
Don't think for a moment I'm tight, Love;
I've only been down to the club."

My book I left down in the hall
And softly I crept up the stairs;
I kept rather close to the wall
And thought I'd ascend unawares.
But just as I got to the door,
I seemed to get lost in the dark;
I stumbled and fell on the floor.
Just then I could only remark:

Chorus

She sobbed, she wept, and she screamed
And said she'd go back to her ma,
While I on the mantel piece leaned
And tried to enjoy my cigar.
I promised to buy her a dress
If she would let me alone for a while,
Then I gave her a sweet little kiss
And I saw her beginning to smile.

Chorus

ONLY FLIRTING

They strolled down the river
Under the moon so fair,
A youth in the prime of manhood,
A girl with the soft brown hair.
His face was white with passion,
Now red by the sunset glow,
As he stopped to catch the murmur
Of an answer soft and low.

Chorus

"Oh! Yes, I was only flirting

Only playing a part
Only a man's life blighted,
Only a broken heart."

"Oh! Yes, I was only flirting."
An innocent look of surprise
Crept under the dark long lashes
And into the dark blue eyes.
"I never knew that you loved me,
Never thought that you really cared,"
And her head bent lower and lower
Under the dark brown hair.

Chorus

"I am going to get married next summer,"
She said, as she gave him her hand.
And gathering her robes around her,
She left him alone in the sand.
She now leans from her carriage
That beautiful haunting face,
She is now a stately lady,
All dressed in satin and lace.

Chorus

He goes 'mid the throng of passers
Always silent and cold,
A man too soon grown weary,
A man too soon grown old.
Oh! Yes, 'twas only flirting,
Only playing a part,
Only a man's life blighted,
Only a broken heart.

(Written for Miss Lelia Ray, Dec. 9th 1897)

TELL HIM I LOVE HIM YET

Tell him I love him yet,
As through the joyous tide
Tell him I'll never forget
Though memory be a crime.
Tell him when fades the light
Away o'er the deep blue sea
I'll dream of him at night
Though he never dreams of me.
I'll dream of him at night
Though he never dreams of me.

Tell him that when I die
To come to a twisting* tree
And there I'll have him sigh
If he will only sigh for me.
Green, green upon his brow
Those laurels yet may be.
But, oh, those laurels now
Can never be shed** by me.
But, oh, those laurels now
Can never be shed** by me.

Tell him that with a Saviour's love
My dying pulses throb.
Tell him with Him above
I love, I love him yet.
Tell him that when I kneel
Before the throne of God,
I'll ever pray for him
In that beautiful home above.
I'll ever pray for him
In that beautiful home above.

(Written for Miss Lelia Ray, May 27, 1898)

* "trysting"?

** "shared"?

WHISPERINGS OF HOPE

Soft as the voice of an angel,
Breathing a lesson unheard,
Hope with gentle persuasion
Whispers a comforting word.
Wait till the darkness is over,
Wait till the tempest is done;
Hope for the sunshine tomorrow
After the shower is done.

Chorus

Whispering hope, oh, how welcome thy voice!
Making my heart in its sorrow rejoice.

If in the dark of a twilight,
Dim be the regions afar,
Will not the deepening darkness
Brighten the glimmering star?
Then when the night is upon us,
Why should the heart sink away?
When the dark midnight is over
Watch for the breaking of day.

Chorus

The Oral Arts

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Living Is Collecting: Growing Up in a Southern Appalachian “Folk” Family

JEAN RITCHIE

Jason Ritchie and Balis Ritchie were both born in Knott County, Kentucky, Jason in 1867 and Balis in 1869. They grew up within a few miles of each other, and met often in their young days at social gatherings—playparties, pie suppers, workings, and church meetings. Both loved music. Jason remembered in later years that Balis was “in demand” at the parties because he played the fiddle and dulcimore and knew all the games and game songs; Balis recollected that all the folks around wanted Jason at the parties so that he could entertain the company at rest times with the old ballads, especially the big ones and the funny ones.

When Balis left Knott County about 1912 and moved to Perry County, settling his growing family on his wife’s inherited property there, he and Jason lost close contact since they didn’t see each other more than once every year or two. Jason studied to become a country lawyer, married, and raised his family in a remote hollow on the Ball Fork of Troublesome Creek.

The next time they met with any time or inclination to think about music was in 1949. Let me say now that this narrative has to be a personal one, for the recipient of the sparks that flew at that meeting was I, myself, and it was my kindling interest in our traditional music that had served to reunite them after so many years.

Balis’s songs and recollections have been set down and preserved in various publications and recordings over the years since then, as have many of Jason’s. However, in preparing this paper, I opened the folder containing Jason’s material and examined it with a critical eye for the first time in many years, and it came as somewhat of a shock to realize that several of Jason’s best songs and tales have never been published. It is therefore my intent to begin to correct that oversight with the publication of this paper, in which I shall make brief mention of my own good fortune in having been born into a family tradition rich in folklore; further mention of the importance (to each other) of these two men in remembering much of their almost forgotten music and tales, having as my main purpose

the presentation of three of Jason's unpublished songs and one of his witch tales.

Let us go back to the beginning of the story, that is, to the first part that is within living memory. In the early days, as Jason would begin it, everyone sang from the same large common body of inherited song in that part of Kentucky, and the Ritchie Family was no more and no less a singing family than any other family around it. In 1917 when Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles came into Knott County on their first song-collecting journey in this country and stopped for a week at the Hindman (Kentucky) Settlement School, two Ritchie girls sang for them, along with representatives of scores of other families. These two girls were second cousins, Una Ritchie, daughter of Balis, and Sabrina Ritchie, daughter of Jason, students at the school and best friends.

According to Una, when word was sent around that Mr. Sharp and Miss Karpeles, strange folk from over the waters, were there and wanted to hear songs, people thronged in from up and down the branches and hollows, literally standing in line awaiting their turns to sing their ballads, love songs, play songs—whatever the furriners might want. Almost everybody had variants of "Barbry Ellen," "Lord Lovel," "Devil's Nine Questions," "Hangsaman," all the common ones, so that by the time Una and Sabrina came to sing, Mr. Sharp showed the most interest in their small fragments of two lesser-known songs, "Nottamun Town" and "Little Devils." Sabrina had heard her father, Jason Ritchie, sing those songs many times, so she and Una decided to spend that weekend at Sabrina's home on Ball and learn the missing verses from Jason. On the following Monday they sang Jason's more complete versions to Mr. Sharp. These two songs appear in the now famous *English Folk Songs From the Southern Appalachians*,¹ credited to Una and Sabrina Ritchie.

This was not Jason Ritchie's first experience with folk song collectors. In the fall of 1914 Miss Josephine McGill had been directed to Jason, who at that time maintained a law office in the town of Hindman. He must have been impressed with her, for he took her up behind him on his horse and escorted her around over the hills, picking out the best singers for her to hear. Yet, there is barely a mention of him in her book.² He also met Loraine Wyman in the spring of 1916, but again he must have done more introducing than putting his own songs and singing forward, for there is not even one mention of him in the credit section of *Lonesome Tunes*³ or her later *Twenty Kentucky Mountain Songs*.⁴

Balis Ritchie had not had as much to do with collectors in those days, apart from hearing about Sharp and Karpeles from his daughter Una, but in his own way he was very much involved with music and song. He played his instruments more for himself than for the public, but he was an avid

collector of tunes and songs in his quiet way. Before the move to Perry County, the family lived for a few years in Hindman. There were eight or nine children by then, and, looking for ways to add to his income as a hillside farmer and sometime schoolteacher, he sent away for a printing press and started publishing a weekly newspaper, "The Democrat Record." Then, as he had the press anyway, he decided to publish a song book, and he gathered the most popular songs in Hindman at that time (the book is undated, but it must have been 1910 or 1911): *Lover's Melodies, A Choice Collection of Old Sentimental Songs Our Grandmothers Sang, and Other Popular Airs*. The price was ten cents. The songs (words only) were "Jackaro," "Blue Bell of Scotland," "Kitty Wells," "Lord Thomas and Fair Ellender," "Brown Eyes," "My Irish Rose," "My Own True Love (Little Turtledove)," "The Lightning Express," "The Printer's Bride," "My Pretty Mohea," "Casey Jones," "All For You," "Bill Bailey," "The Foreign Lander," "Little Nellie," "Steamboat Bill," and "Jim Blake."

From the contents of this book, it would seem that Balis, being an instrument player, was hearing and learning the new music of the day (e.g., "Bill Bailey" and the new railroad ballads like "Jim Blake") and was sprinkling them in among the old songs in a conscious effort to bring his neighbors up-to-date musically. Jason, on the other hand, may have had more of a sense of the value of the older songs, since he knew so few of the new ones. Whatever his musical motivation his repertoire even at the age of eighty-three, in 1949 when I met him, included practically no non-traditional songs. Perhaps, as is often the case, his appreciation for the old songs was reinforced after he met the collectors.

Jason and Balis did not meet again, beyond an occasional handshake and small talk at a church meeting here and there until 1949, and this came about because of a chance remark my mother made to me.

Growing up in the Ritchie family at Viper, I had always sung the old ballads and handed-down music in all the family and community situations wherein folks sang, and in addition I had been in on the advent of the radio, the silent movies and the talkies, so that my repertoire as a young girl included early hillbilly and tin-pan alley hits of the day, alongside the older family music, and I shared my father's interest in all the modern music coming in to us from the "outside." The Ritchie clan was by this time so large and spread out through the isolated hollows that I, being the youngest of fourteen and a Perry Countian born, had never met Jason Ritchie or "Uncle Jason" as he had come to be called throughout the region. But in my late teens I had myself been exposed to the enthusiasm of folk-song collectors—John and Alan Lomax (they had visited our neighbors in Hazard, nine miles away, and we had heard all

about it), Mary Elizabeth Barnacle, John Jacob Niles—and their interest had turned me toward our traditional music. I began to take down songs and tales from anyone who would oblige me—my mother, Abigail Hall Ritchie, my sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Balis, my dad, would sing and hum a little, but he was shy about singing. He would rather just play the dulcimer and think the words. At last my mother, seeing that my interest was real, said, “You ought to meet up with Jason, Dad’s cousin over on Ball. He knows every song that ever was.”

On a hot July day in 1949, I went on foot over the mountain paths, to Turkey Holler at the Head of the Roaring Fork of the Big Branch of Ball Fork of Troublesome Creek, where Jason was staying with his married daughter, Sarah Patrick. The post office address of this place is Talcum, Kentucky. He was pleased to see me, and, although he did not know me, almost his first words were, “I have been waiting a long time for you to come.”

After a good day of singing and visiting, I persuaded him to come over soon to Viper to visit us, and in a few weeks he came. I was amazed at the number and quality of the songs he knew. Some I took down as poems, others he sent to me later, handwritten on rough tablet sheets with a pencil. One of the first ones he sang for me that day was the one about Robin Hood and the good squires. It seems to be quite an ordinary variant of the song, but fairly complete, and as far as I have been able to determine authentically learned from oral tradition in Jason’s community.

There are twelve months in all the year
As I have heard many men say-a,⁵
But the merriest month in all the year
Is the merry month of May-a.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone
With a link and a down and a day,
And there he’s met with a silly old woman
Was a-weeping along the way.

What news, what news, you silly old woman
That makes you weep and cry?
There are three good squires in Nottingham town
This day is condemned to die.

O have they parishes burnt, said he,
Or have they ministers slain,
Or have they spoilt any virgin fair
Or any other men’s wives taken?

Of what have they done, said bold Robin Hood,
I pray now tell it to me?

O it is for the shooting of the King's fallow deer,
Bearing their long bows with thee.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone
With a link and a down and a day,
And there he's met with an old fortuneteller
Was a-walking along the way.

What news, what news, thou silly old man,
What news, come tell me, pray?
O three good squires in Nottingham town
Are condemned to die this day.

Then he put on this old man's clothes
All patched and ragged and red,
And he thought it no shame all the way along
To ask for a beggerman's bread.

And now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone
With a link and a day and a down,
And it's there he's met the old sheriff himself
Was a-walking about the town.

Now say and save, O sheriff, he cried,
O save and you shall see,
And what'll you give an old beggarman
Today your hangman to be?

I'll give some suit, the sheriff he said,
Some suit will I give to thee,
Some suit, some suit and pence fifteen,
For that is a hangman's fee.

Well, I never was a hangman in all of my life,
Nor yet intend for the trade,
And a-cursed be the day, cried bold Robin Hood
That there ever was a hangman made.

I have got a little horn in my pocket,
And I got it from Robin Hood;
And if I should place it to my lips
It'll blow to thee no good.

Now blow your horn, you silly old man,
Of thee I have no doubt;
I wish that you would blow such a blast
That both your eyes'd fall out.

The very first blast that Robin did blow,
He blew both loud and shrill,

Then a hundred a fifty of his own good men
Come a-ridening over the hill.

The very next blast that Robin did blow,
He blew so loud and a-main,
Till a hundred more of his own good men
Come a-ridening over the plain.

Whose men, whose men, the old proud sheriff cried,
Comes a-trippling over the lea?
These are my men, said bold Robin Hood,
Just a-paying a little visit to thee.

They tore the old sheriff's gallows down,
And built it back up in the glen,
They hung the old sheriff till he was dead,
Let a-loose their own three men.

There followed, in the next few days, "False Sir John and May Colvin," "The Oxfordshire Lass," "Will the Weaver," "Young Edward in the Lowland Low," "The Lyttle Musgrave," and later ones such as "Joe Bowers" and "The Rowin County Crew."

Upon his return to his home, Jason wrote to me. Here are some excerpts from that letter: "Aug. 30, 1949, Talcum, Ky. Dear Miss Ritchie.... Well things with me are about as usual.... I was at the Ritchie Reunion on Clear Creek and your dad and mother was there... the crowd was small, you see it was the day after election...a girl there got together a bunch of small girls and they had me to sing the one about the old dog in the mush...it seemed to be great fun for them.... Well I note what you say about the songs we talked about.... Sins I saw you I hav been searching through my brains only now and then to see if I could find any song hid away. And hav found a lot more, some of them good ones. I am writeing them down as I hav time for fear that I forget them...."

One of these was a song I have been unable to find in any of our collections or in any other form or variant. I suspect that it was composed in the region and perhaps known to only a few local singers. Jason called it "Dunmore's War," and on the back of the song sheet he wrote this comment: "This song is older than our government. It was composed by some one when Lord Dunmore was governor of Virginia. The battle was between the Virginians and a large body of Indians near the mouth of the Kanawha River on the banks of the Ohio River. I heard my grandmother sing this song, about Dunmore's War. You can look it down in history."

Let us mind the tenth day of October,
Seventy-four, which caused us woe,
The Indian savages they did cover
The pleasant banks of the Ohio.

The battle beginning in the morning,
Throughout the day it lasted sore,
Till the evening shadows was returning
Down upon the banks of the Ohio.

Judgment proceeds to execution,
Let fame throughout all dangers go.
Our heros fought with resolution
Upon the banks of the Ohio.

Sevenscore men lay dead and wounded
Of champions that did face their foe,
By which the savage was confounded
Upon the banks of the Ohio.

Colonel Lewis and some noble captains
Did down to death like brave men go,
Now let their graves be ever honored
Upon the banks of the Ohio.

Israel lamented their mighty fallen
Upon the mountain of Gilboa,
And now we mourn for our own heros
That fell on the banks of the Ohio.

O bless the mighty King of Heaven
For all His wondrous works below,
Who hath to us the victory given
Upon the banks of the Ohio.

Three more years of correspondence and visiting followed. As he was about to leave for his home after one of the earlier stays at our house, Jason paused at the door. "Well, this'n mayn't be worth anything, but it's an old one. Do you know that one, where this girl—they'uz sweethearts and he went on a ramble...and finally she tuck the baby and went for a sail on the ocean to hunt 'im up. I think his name was Grigoree, of something like that. Boys used to pick it on the banjer, but now it's got a prettier tune than they used. It starts out with, 'Who will shoe your bonny feet and who will glove your hand.' You ever hear that'n?"

He said he couldn't recollect it all right then, but that he'd try to get it together for me. After about three weeks, there arrived in the mail from Talcum, Kentucky, a very good and fairly complete version of this song which he called "Fair Annie of the Lochroyan." When I asked him how he had managed to remember so much of the song after so many years, he confessed that in addition to "searching through his brains," he had gone to see an old crony who used to sing the song with a blind fiddler named Billy Day. Day had also sung the Robin Hood ballad. In later taped in-

interviews, Jason named other singers he had known: Will and Harrison Wooton, a Mrs. Green, and a Williams family. He mentions this family in connection with his splendid version of "The Oxfordshire Lass." Jason said, "They'uz sweethearts, and...she got pregnant. Went'n told'im bout it and he killed 'er...tuck 'er off in th' night...let me think on the tune of it...some of the Williamses, I heard 'em sing it...."

The Oxford Girl

My parents raised me tenderly and provided for me well,
It was in the town of Oxfordshire they placed me in a mill;
It was there I met an Oxford lass with a dark and charming eye,
I asked her if she would consent one night with me to lie.

O she consented unto me, as you may all well know,
Poor girl, it was that cruel night proved both our overthrow.
Soon after that she came to me, and said she was with child.
She said that I must marry her, since her I had beguiled.

Her sister often came to me and by my side did stand,
She persuaded me to marry her all straightway off at hand;
Then what to do I did not know, I considered night and day;
The devil he persuaded me to take her life away.

I went unto her sister's house at eight o'clock at night.
Poor creature, little did she think I owed her any spite.
I asked her if she would walk with me in the field a little way,
That we could talk and soon agree, and appoint the wedding day.

All hand in hand we went along unto a lonesome place;
I drew a stake out of the hedge and smote her over the face.
Down on her bended knees she fell and did for mercy cry,
For heavens sake don't murder me for I am not fit to die.

No mercy on her I did show but wounded her full sore,
O there I put my love to death whom I cannot restore.
Then for to wash the stain away I took her by the hair
And dragged her to the river and I threw her body there.

Then straightway to the mill I run like one all in a maze.
The miller fixed his eyes on me and at me he did gaze,
Saying what's this blood upon your hands, likewise upon your clothes?
I answered him immediately, the blood is from my nose.

Next day this maiden she was missed and nowhere could be found,
And I was apprehended soon, to the high sheriff bound.
Her sister there against me swore, she said she had no doubt,
She swore she thought I murdered her, by me calling of her out.

O Lord, give me a praying heart and time for to repent,
I soon will leave this wicked world, so shamefully I am sent.
Lord wash my sins and guilt away, they are of the darkest fold;
O lord from heaven look down on me, and Christ receive my soul.

One of the most remarkable results of Jason's visits was their effect on Balis. Whether it was that Jason's singing and reminiscing stirred Balis's memory, or just that he didn't like to be outshone in his own house by his cousin, whenever Jason was there Balis would overcome his shyness and match him song for song, variant against variant. And it became evident that Balis knew just as many songs as Jason did, although he specialized in the later, more local ones, and he knew many more fiddle tunes and play songs than did Jason. He could also carry the tunes better, but no one ever made this observation in front of Jason. It was Balis who remembered "I Was Born in Old Virginny," "Shady Grove," "Soldier's Joy (Love Somebody, Yes I Do)," and "Little Lonesome Dove," to name just a few.

On a trip down to Kentucky from New York in 1951 (I had been married to George Pickow in 1950), my husband and I took with us the latest development in recording equipment, a wire recorder, on which we recorded the melodies for some of the songs from the family. Jason's voice had almost gone by that time, so I have had to use my imagination for most of his tunes. However, it didn't seem important to him that a set of words be matched with the correct tune. He'd say, "Why, hunt you up a tune that'll suit it [the song]; they's a lot of them that'll fit it." Nevertheless, I have always tried to work around what I suppose Jason's tunes to be, although I am sure they are not too close to the originals except in the cases of those songs known and sung by Balis or by others in the region.

One day an especially fat letter arrived from Jason. It was a tale about witches, written out as usual by hand in pencil on note paper. Like Jason, I do not know if this is of any value, but witch stories were a part of his repertoire, and he used to be called upon to tell them at family circles and larger gatherings, so I will set it down here in his own words. Spelling and punctuation are also his own. Written on the back of one of the pages is this brief note: "Talcum, Ky., June 2....Well Jean here goes an old witch story. you must believe all that is in it. you know no one would tell a story [lie] about a witch. As ever, Jason."

Unbewitching the Gun

The early settlers of Kentucky wer from Virginna especially those who settled the mountain parts of the state. Some came to the mountains at an early date and at a time when most of the people wer eccited over...witchcraft. In that early day the setlers depended upon their rifles for most all their needs. They shot the game upon which they lived

they defended themselves from roving bands of indians and the savage wild beasts that...wer very numerous. And as the gun was so useful it could but be expected that the witches would hav some misterious way of causening them to bee so inaccurate that the hunter could not hit anything that he shot at. When this hapened to a gun the hunter said that a wizard had cast a spell on his gun.

In that day far up in thees hills there was a groop of people who had settled and was living very hapy who no dout thought they had esscaped the wiles of old satan. but they wer destined to bee disappointed. In that groop of people there liven a man whos name was Patrit. and one whos name was Dobins.

The story goes that Mr. Patrit had a fine rifle that was known as the Ky long rifle. the same tipe of rifle that was used by the Kentuckians at the battle of neworleans. Mr Patrirts gun had never failed him and he had all kinds of confidenc in her.

But what did he think when he went hunting one day and found a heard of fine deer and could not hit any of them one large buck with an enormous head of horns stood with hair erect and seemed to come closter each time the hunter fired at him. Mr. Patrit fired away all his powder and balls and the old buck still stood and gazed at the hunter. Each day for some time after this Patrit met this same old buck and never was able to hit him with a single shot. After consulting with Mrs. Patrit They decided that the gun was bewitched.

The next step was to see the witch docter. In that day there was some men who claimed to possess power by which they could counteract the witches and punish them. thees men wer known as witch doctors.

There was one of thees DRS whos name was Smiley and lived some 25 miles away. So they sent for DR Smiley.

On the day that DR Smiley was to come The neighbor folks gathered to the home of Mr Patrit all curious to see a witch DR. The DR arrived near noon and all was curious to see and hear him talk This man wore a robe made of bare skin and some ancientt kind of foot ware. And his head was bare And hair was long and hung down below his shoulders and his whiskers wer in a unbecomeing condition

After greeting all the People present the DR excused the condition of his hair and whiskers. he told his listeners that like Sampson of old he was forbiden to hav his hair cut and like Saul he could not suffer a razor to pass over his face. but he said when his whisker became to long the old umin meaning his wife clipped them with her sheep Shares.

He then ask for the rifle and ask many questions. he said that the gun was bewitched he looked through the barrel of tube toward the sun and said it was all very plain. He told Mr. Patrit that the deer he had shot at was not a deer that it was the wizard or witch who by the power of satan had turned himself into a deer. he said that lead was a base metal and that witches had power over lead and that you could not kill a witch with lead. He then placed the gun on the floor and nealing down by it and waved his hands over it all the while he was talking some kind of talk that those present could not understand...He then took the gun to a small stream and placed her in the water so that the water would flow in at the britch and out at the muzzle. Instantly Mr Dobins began to throw up and had great pain in his abdomen and so long as the water flowed through the gun he was no better but grew worse. At length the barrel of the gun begun to warp and spring from one side to the other. the Dr told Mr Patrit that if the gun should be changed so that the water would flow in at the muzzle and out at the britch, the witch would die sooner. The DR was preparing to change ends of the gun when Mrs Dobins apeared with hand upraised beging for the life of her husband Mrs Patrit who was of a kind hart and a friend of Mrs Dobins prevailed on the DR to take the gun out of the water and Thus saved the live of Mr Dobins.

The story goes Dobins was confined to his bed for many months before he recovered.

the next day Mr Patrit went hunting and killed three fine deer and never missed a Shot. When Mr Dobins recovered he mooved from that place and was never heard of any more.

In all his letters and conversation, Jason made disparaging remarks about his witch tales, saying they were "next-to-no-account," and disclaimed any belief in them, but he continued to send them along with the songs.

Balis, my father, died in 1958; Jason a year earlier in 1957. My father's songs are so much a part of me that I cannot accurately count them. Jason, who certainly knew many more than he was able to "remember up" in his old age, gave me by rough count some seventy songs and six witch tales on tapes, wires, by handwritten ballit, and, most important to me, by swapping songs and tales in our home with his cousin Balis.

NOTES

¹Cecil Sharp, with Olive Dame Campbell, *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (New York: Putnam, 1917).

²Josephine McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1917).

³Loraine Wyman, *Lonesome Tunes* (New York: H. W. Gray Co., 1916).

⁴Loraine Wyman, *Twenty Kentucky Mountain Songs* (Boston: Oliver Ditson Co., 1925).

⁵The words ending the second and fourth lines of the first verse here are set down as "say-a" and "May-a" to indicate Jason's vocal treatment of the tune. He did this throughout the song, and, while he sometimes used the traditional English "O" (e.g., "day-O"), it came across to the listener more as a kind of a *resting* of the voice on that word before commencing the next line or verse, so that most of the time it emerged as an "a" or "ah" sound. I have left this spelling of these ending words off in all but the first, since I feel they belong to the melodic rendition and not necessarily to the poem.

The Gap in Oral Tradition

BETTY N. SMITH

The life of a folk song depends not upon print, but upon its appeal to children. If the young ones don't like what they hear their old folks singing, those songs will be forgotten. In this sense all folk song is made for children....¹

But what if the children never hear their old folks singing?

When Cecil Sharp came to the Southern Appalachians in 1916 he found that singing was a community art. The people lived simple lives in small, self-contained communities, cut off by the mountains and bad roads. Few could read and write, but Sharp spoke of their "fine inherited culture" apparent in the songs they sang, most of which were of British origin.² In England Sharp had collected songs mainly from people over the age of sixty, but in the Southern Appalachians everyone sang, young and old alike. Mountain people were living in a "musical atmosphere"³ where children received a legacy of songs and games which they in turn bequeathed to their children. Some of the songs and games had been known in England in the eleventh century.

But when Cecil Sharp's assistant, Maud Karpeles, returned to the Southern mountains in 1950, she found that the ideal state—"the truly musical community"—had not persisted. Children no longer learned songs from their parents. Sharp had found singing "a great power,"⁴ but the sentiment for song was not enough to maintain the stream of oral tradition. The writing down of the songs saved the songs, but it did little to keep them alive in oral tradition.

William Wells Newell, a contemporary of Francis James Child and a leading folklorist, had predicted the loss of the oral traditions as early as 1883. In that year he published *Games and Songs of American Children* in which he stated his belief that the traditional games and songs were vanishing rapidly. Newell was somewhat premature. The old songs and games have been more durable than he thought; many of them can still be found somewhere among English-speaking children. But what Newell saw coming may indeed come to pass.

Historically, folk song has proven hardy and strong even though it has gone through continual change. But it is not gradual change that concerns us here. We are worried about what mountain fiddler Tommy Hunter has called a "gap"—a gap between parents and children in the transmission of

songs, rhymes, and games. Small children come to school when they are five or six without a song or even a nursery rhyme to call their own. Even jump-rope rhymes are hard to come by in some schools.

In the early sixties Frank H. Smith sent out questionnaires to 655 elementary teachers in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia to gain information about children's singing games in the Appalachian region. Only 219 questionnaires were returned. The data were not reassuring. Although singing games were played in 94 percent of the schools reporting and in 84 percent of the schools the children were said to have their own singing-game traditions played on the school ground and in the classrooms, the interest in singing games declined when the children reached fifth or sixth grade, when competitive games and current dance fads monopolized their attention.⁵ In the past ten to fifteen years the interest in competitive games has certainly increased and the age for participation has dropped. So it appears that traditional play-party games and children's singing games, which were in common use in mountain communities a generation ago, are being forgotten today.⁶

In one mountain community, long known for its vital, living tradition of folk song, I know of but one young person who is striving to learn the songs and singing styles of the older singers. Young people are more interested in playing old-time fiddle and banjo in the popular bluegrass and country styles. Speaking of her youth, Jean Ritchie says, "I cannot remember any outstanding instrumentalists from those days, but I remember scores of great singers."⁷ The invention of radio and television has brought entertainment to a people who had always been able to provide for their own amusement:

They can afford to forget the old songs. But they can also learn new ones from across the world as easily as across the hollow....Thus, almost overnight, the regional and family traditions are being obliterated. The mass media, while they frustrate geographical distinctions also take away the desire to cherish and preserve a tribal inheritance of song, such as that of the Ritchie family in Kentucky...or the Harmons in Tennessee.⁸

It is not inconceivable that, as radio and TV commercialism invaded and overtook traditional country music, the mountain man became ashamed of his music and thought it "old timey." The tendency to hold on to the old ways was more than matched by the tendency of a more sophisticated society to deprecate the old ways and the old music as being obsolete.

The electronic devices ushered in the age of noise. Children are saturated with cacophony from all sides. Traditional songs do not thrive in such an atmosphere. Contemplative, creative activities and listening become all but impossible. What chance has a little one of rocking a doll baby to sleep with a television piping in constant sound? Indeed, does the little one know a lullaby to sing? Or did her mother rock her while she

watched soap operas on television? Or was she rocked at all?

Free time activities have become, for the most part, passive activities. The record player plays mood music which accompanies other activities. The dishes are washed to recorded music, rather than to "Aunt Rhody" or "Barbry Allen." Mass communication is in reality no communication at all; the "media" might better be called conveyors.

The mass of the people have accepted passive entertainment with its subsequent implication of a division between those who can and those who cannot, between the talented and the untalented....This gives a false impression of musical talent, which like all others is a continuum, and not a rare quality possessed in entirety or not at all.⁹

When schools became available to mountain children, the inclination was to train away from what was considered "country," rather than to train for leadership in the "country."¹⁰ The public school, "that mighty engine of equalization,"¹¹ has generally aimed at a high degree of consensus. Mountain schools have been for the most part shaped by urban influences, and they have stressed preparatory requirements for college and professional life. With a few notable exceptions, such as the Hindman School and Pine Mountain School in Kentucky ("where youngsters were taught to appreciate their own"),¹² little emphasis has been placed on the heritage of folk song and native culture.

Children's store of singing games, songs, rope-jumping rhymes, and verses seems to be dwindling more and more as society becomes more and more print-oriented, and as children spend less time with their families. In the extended family, the grandmother or the grandfather was the keeper of the tribal lore. In mountain culture older women were revered, and they were often the ones who had time to spend with the children, telling stories, singing songs. Before the days when mothers had to work in textile mills to help feed the family, they too were always present. Maude Long of Hot Springs, North Carolina, introduced the Jack Tales in this way:

I cannot remember when I heard the Jack, Will, and Tom tales for the first time. For we grew up on them like we did the mountain air and the lovely old ballads that my mother used to sing to us. It would be on a long winter evening when, after supper, all of us were gathered before the big open fire, my mother taking care of the baby or else the baby was in the cradle very near to mother. And she would be carding or sewing. My father would be mending someone's shoes or maybe a bit of harness. The older girls were helping with the carding or the sewing. All of us little ones would either have a lapful or a basket full of wool out of which we must pick all the burrs....And to keep our eyes open and our fingers busy and our hearts merry, my mother would tell these marvellous tales....¹³

Bascom Lamar Lunsford advised me many years ago to commit to memory anything I wanted to save. His belief was that if you know something you are likely to share it. If it is a song, you are likely to sing it where someone will hear it and learn it. However, with the transference from oral to visual habits, we cannot expect preservation and evolution of

the folk song to continue indefinitely by traditional methods, so it is well that we have permanent records. A North Carolina singer said to Maud Karpeles: "When I forget Mother's songs, I know I have only to look in Cecil Sharp's book and they will come back to me just exactly right."¹⁴

May Justus grew up in the shadow of the Great Smoky Mountains, and inherited a host of ballads, play-party songs and games, nonsense rhymes, and riddles. She learned them from family, kinfolks, friends, and schoolmates. She has recollections of her mother singing as she went about her household duties, of singing to her father's fiddle by the fire at night, of learning games on the school yard—but never from the teacher.¹⁵

Bascom Lamar Lunsford, known as "The Minstrel of the Appalachians," learned songs from his mother. When he began collecting songs, games, and fiddle tunes, he found a source in school children. In a one-teacher school on Roaring Fork in Madison County, North Carolina, in 1927 he learned "Little Margaret" from a nine-year-old girl, Loretta Payne. She had learned it from her mother and her grandmother. Mr. Lunsford said the mountains had "more traditional music than other parts of the country because they used it over and over."¹⁶

Horace Kephart wrote of the mountaineers having "a native fondness for music and dancing."¹⁷ Since singing and dancing were usually carried on in homes or at the school, children were exposed from babyhood to people who actually participated in these activities. Everybody in the community came to weddings and seasonal workings, such as syrup making and harvesting. When the work was done, the music and dancing began. Sharp found this "an ideal society" where

every child in his earliest years would as a matter of course develop this inborn capacity and learn to sing the songs of his forefathers in the same natural and unselfconscious way in which he now learns his mother tongue and the elementary literature of the nation to which he belongs.¹⁸

People who are natural singers go about singing at whatever they are doing. So music is not only an art form which requires no training and no money; it is not dependent on the amount of leisure time one has. Jean Ritchie has written of singing while churning, making up verses to make the butter come; of singing in the corn field, taking time out for a drink of cool water and a snatch of song; of singing in the kitchen to the accompaniment of pots and pans.¹⁹ Folk songs sing about people's names ("Mary is her first name, among the little white daisies, oh"), the clothes they wear and their colors ("Mary wore a red dress," "Will you wear blue, Jennie Jenkins?"), and numbers ("One little, two little, three little Indians"). In folk songs animals are usually friendly and human ("Froggie went a-courtin and he did ride"), but not always ("And got swallowed up by a big black snake"). The songs of our heritage are honest; they describe death

("Old Roger is dead and laid in his grave"), sadness ("Somebody stole my old coon dog"), and anger ("There was a man and he was mad"). Some songs celebrate nonsense ("Saw a flea kick a tree, Fooba Wooba John"), and some lament human failings ("Lazy John, will you marry me?"). Some suggest action and movement ("Hey, jump along, Josie"), and some should be danced to ("Skip, skip, skip to my lou"). There are songs for rocking the baby ("Hushabye, don't you cry"), and for quiet singing to yourself ("Saw a crow flying low, kitty alone"), and for singing loud with other people ("Get along home, Cindy"). Songs tell stories ("A fox went out one moonshiny night"). There's even a song to get your hair cut by ("Johnny, get your hair cut, just like me"). Children who grow up in the company of singers begin early to "absorb" music. Cecil Sharp reported children who knew not only game songs and nursery songs but also long ballads. One was heard to say, "I always like to go where there is sweet music."²⁰

In *Children of the Cumberland* Claudia Lewis told of five-year-old Earline drawing her chair up to the stove, rocking her doll to sleep while singing the ballad "The Polished Steps." This was not childish mimicking but ballad singing in a loud clear voice. The other children pulled their chairs up to listen. They listened for fifteen or twenty minutes. The children had never shown such interest in the teacher's "little songs about trains, wagons, horses, etc."²¹

Folk music is sometimes called "peasant music," the sole property of country people. But music known to mountain children has certainly not been their sole property. Children everywhere have a heritage of song, though folk-song traditions have persisted longer and "thrived best among people living close to nature."²² In 1947 Richard Chase wrote that "children in the streets of New York and children in the hollows of the Southern Mountains play essentially the same singing games, changing and adapting each game to their own environment."²³ Children preserve traditional songs and games because they like them, or they forget what does not appeal to them. The songs they have kept have gone through many variations, arriving at a rightness which children everywhere recognize. This is the kind of music which is not strictly "children's music." It is music almost everyone can make; it invites participation. Folk music is "accustomed to action, to being danced to, clapped to, skipped to, worked to," for it has been a "natural part of work, play, sleep, fun, ridicule, love, and death."²⁴

Children, wherever they live, have a right to the music of their heritage. It gives security, a sense of belonging; it helps prepare a child to live in his own community. Singing traditional songs or telling traditional stories is much like looking into a pool of deep, clear water. In the depths we can sense the mysterious continuity of history and culture. What a boost to the

self-image to know the songs and games, rhymes and stories familiar to others in the family and the community. My father sang "Paw Paw Patch" and "Alabama Gal" to each child and grandchild as he or she came along, and he poked fun with such nonsense as "Here I stand upon a stump, come and kiss me fore I jump." Learning the words of a song may not be as important as sharing music with others. It is a painless way for children to learn rhythm and melody, poetry and rhyme. Games and simple dances bring children into group activities—linking arms, holding hands, dancing together—which establish a feeling of belonging.

A young man I met at a traditional music festival said that the singing had made him homesick for eastern Kentucky. Before the festival he had been indifferent about the "hicks" back home and scornful about the "hillbilly" music. But after hearing Jean and Edna Ritchie, Roscoe Holcomb, and others, he was eager to get back home, to see his kin, to talk to them, and to hear more of the music.

Modern civilization replaced sturdy homespun with cheap clothing, nourishing homegrown with processed food, and vital singing with cheap, commercial music. And our youth know they have been deprived. One young man explained the involvement of young people in the so-called "Great Folk Song Revival" in the following way:

They feel that they have been cheated by not being brought up in a folklore tradition...they want to make their own tradition. They sing the old ballads and songs but they also want to make up their own songs.²⁵

In view of all the tragedies which have befallen the people of the Appalachians, the loss of a singing tradition may seem trivial. It is, however, symptomatic of what has happened to the quality of life because of the stresses on family life, the overwhelming influence of a more complex society, and the intervention of the media. And children are the losers.

NOTES

¹John A. and Alan Lomax, *Folk Song U.S.A.* (New York: New American Library, 1966), 23.

²Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, H. Milford, 1932), xxi-xxxvii.

³Maud Karpeles, *An Introduction to English Folk Song* (London, 1973), 97.

⁴Sharp, xvii.

⁵Frank H. Smith, "Dances and Singing Games," in *The Southern Appalachian Region, A Survey*, ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1967), 273.

⁶Smith, 274.

⁷Jean Ritchie, *Dulcimer People* (New York: Oak Publications, 1975), 7.

⁸Bertrand Bronson, *The Ballad as Song* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), 256.

⁹Edward Lee, *Music of the People* (London: Humanities, 1970), 193.

- ¹⁰John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1921), 285.
- ¹¹William Wells Newell, *Games and Songs of American Children* (New York, 1883), 2.
- ¹²Jean Ritchie, *Folk Songs of the Southern Appalachians* (New York: Oak Publications, 1965), 5.
- ¹³Duncan Emrich, *Folklore on the American Land* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1972), 340. Mrs. Long's mother, Jane Hicks Gentry, sang no less than sixty-four songs for Cecil Sharp.
- ¹⁴Karpeles, 101.
- ¹⁵May Justus, *The Complete Peddler's Pack* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1967), xi.
- ¹⁶Loyal Jones, "The Minstrel of the Appalachians," *JEMF Quarterly*, Spring 1973, 4.
- ¹⁷Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders* (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 336.
- ¹⁸Sharp, xxv.
- ¹⁹Jean Ritchie, *Singing Family of the Cumberlands* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), 23.
- ²⁰Sharp, xxv.
- ²¹Claudia Lewis, *Children of the Cumberland* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1946), 190.
- ²²Karpeles, 13.
- ²³Richard Chase, *Singing Games and Playparty Games* (New York: Dover Pub., 1949), 1. See also Richard Chase, *American Folk Tales and Songs* (New York: New American Library, 1956), and *Old Songs and Singing Games* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1938).
- ²⁴Ruth Crawford Seeger, *American Folk Songs for Children* (New York, 1948), 21, 23.
- ²⁵B.A. Botkin, "The Folksong Revival: Cult or Culture?" in *The American Folk Scene*, ed. David A. DeTurk and A. Poulin, Jr. (New York: Dell Pub. Co., 1967), 98.

Friday at Parhams': Contemporary Appalachian Music In Context

JOAN MOSER

For over three quarters of a century Southern Appalachia has been fertile ground for research, recording, and speculation by folklorists, anthropologists, and musicologists. Some came and still come as collectors of "cultural artifacts," and some as participants in the life of the region. Many of these researchers have been outsiders; some have stayed but a few weeks at a time, perhaps returning once a year on what they call "field trips."

Not unlike their intellectual forebears, the brothers Grimm in Germany, researchers here have for the most part assumed that the "folk culture" is dying. But ethnography and folkloristics as methods of research are themselves changing and new perspectives are now available to us. If we as individual researchers, either by choice or by necessity (because we live here), take advantage of the opportunity "to set a spell," we discover that the nostalgic picture of a "dying culture" no longer seems appropriate.

All human beings change because they are living, and change need not necessarily imply decay or disintegration and death. Instead, if we look in a positive way we can perceive differences in the overt evidence of continuing creativity—here as in other world cultures—in art, in music, in folktale, in technology. The "tradition" of creating itself remains alive, strong, and conscious among the people.

Here in Appalachia many observers have suggested that one of the "threads that run so true" in supporting the culture is the nuclear family unit. In music and the practice of the oral arts this seems especially evident.

The outward manifestations of these family units are to be found today at the numerous music festivals throughout the region. At those, such family groups as the J.P. Fraleys, the McLains, the Littles, Lewis and Donna Lamb, Addie Graham and her grandson Rich Kirby, the Smathers family, the Carter family, and several generations of Ritchies join other groups too numerous to mention.

Behind the scenes, perhaps never reaching festivals, are many other family groups which often meet in their own homes. Visited by friends and

neighbors, these gatherings sustain living and lively traditions. On Bear Creek Road just outside of Leicester in Buncombe County, North Carolina, there is a four-room plank house where Ulus Commodore ("Chub") Parham and his wife Thelma live. The Parhams work at factories and at part-time farming. In this mountain community, they live on land owned by his family for several generations. It was inherited from ancestors who included German immigrants and American Indians. Every Friday evening, with rare exceptions, musicians and people who come to listen have been gathering regularly in their home since July 1967. In this Appalachian region, such gatherings are not unusual. Parallel events have been happening for many years at crossroads grocery stores, filling stations, apple and tomato warehouses, and old deserted cabins. It is my assumption that all such events serve to nourish a vital process or oral and aural teaching, learning, and creating. This educating process is complex, exercising a multi-dimensional impact on the arts and lives of the people it involves. An exploration of this process is the intent of this paper.

Mr. Parham has played guitar, banjo, and fiddle for years in various local groups. The musical gatherings in his own home began when the Parham's son Ray was learning to play guitar as a teenager. In a taped interview the Parhams jointly narrated the genesis of this ensemble in their own home:

Mrs. Parham: ...When Ray started learnin to play, Earl started comin over, Earl Parham. And that's when they would play a little, two or three nights a week.

Mr. Parham: Me and Ray and Earl.

Mrs. Parham: And then we went skatin [roller skating] all the time and met Kennard Wallen at the skatin rink and he started comin over ever so often and bringin his bass [string bass viol]. And at that time he played th' gitar some too, didn't he? And we went over there a few times and it went from that to Mr. Bell [fiddler].

Mr. Parham: One Sunday evenin.

Mrs. Parham: Mr. Bell and Woodfin [McCanless] came out. I don't know how many years they had played [together].

[From this nucleus of five musicians, the group expanded.]

Mr. Parham: They's about nine fiddlers every Friday night.

Moser: Are they usually the same ones? Well, I know Tommy Hunter [comes]; Mack Snoderly, does he?

Mr. Parham: Yes, Mack, and Arvil Freeman, Gordon Freeman, Marvin Faulkner, J. C. Naves, and Mr. Bell.

Mrs. Parham: Earl Parham plays the fiddle most of the time.

Mr. Parham: Earl does.

Mrs. Parham: And Hoyle Bowen.

Mr. Parham: Hoyle Bowen.

[The Parhams continue by naming several guitarists and banjo players, but remark that none of them attend as often as the fiddlers.]

Moser: And your regular bass player seems to be Ken Wallen.

Mrs. Parham: Yes, now Earl Parham is a good bass player but he never brings his bass on Friday night because he says we don't have room for it, you know. So that's the only reason he doesn't bring it [8/26/73].¹

Although the Parhams mention the participants by name and the instruments they play, there is not a single "professional" musician among them. Within this society which has been designated "Appalachian," there are few people who actually make their full-time livings as musicians. Historical documentation suggests that there never has been a tradition in this society of supporting such specialists. Instead, there are people like Tommy Hunter, descendant of American Indians and Irish immigrants to this region, who is an electrician and carpenter by trade. There is Arvil Freeman whose ancestors came to Appalachia from England and who makes a living as a butcher. The oldest member of the group, eighty-year-old Thomas Jepthe Bell, whose ancestors were brought by Oglethorpe to the Georgia colony, has retired as an auto mechanic. The youngest lead fiddler, in his thirties, is Dr. Robert Mack Snoderly, who practices dentistry. He is the only regular member here who holds a college degree. His ancestors, English and German, settled in Union County, Tennessee, after the disastrous battle of Alamance Courthouse. They had taken sides with the losing colonial rebels and left North Carolina for a while to avoid the royal governor's hangman.

Though none calls himself a professional musician, any of these men is competent enough to compete favorably. Music is woven into this society democratically. It is available to all and everyone is encouraged to participate. And the participators rather than the spectators are in the majority.

The accumulated personnel of this ensemble, having become relatively stable by 1973, consists of nine fiddlers, three or four guitarists, two or three banjo players, and one string bassist (the string bass is called the "bull fiddle"). Of these, the fiddlers, two guitarists, and the bass player attend most consistently. If no banjo player is present, Mr. Parham plays that instrument. This maintains the basic core ensemble—fiddle and banjo sometimes supplemented by guitar—which is not unlike many other musical get-togethers in the Appalachian region.

Step up onto the front porch of the Parham home on any Friday evening around sundown and you are sure to hear the music. On entering, you

would be introduced first to Mrs. Parham, by some friend who has already been there to visit, to listen, or to play music. As a stranger, you would not go there alone at first. It would be considered rude to do so. And because of this, among those who know the location of the house, there seems to be an unspoken rule against sending anyone there alone for the first time. But having been there once assures your future access, even without the presence of the person who originally took you there.

If you were carrying an instrument, Mrs. Parham would introduce you to her husband who would help you tune up. The keen skill he employs in this process results in a constant excellence of intonation, no matter how much the ensemble expands during the evening. Later, if you should get out of tune, someone might lean toward you and ask softly, "Is your coffee cup in tune?" Humor as a corrective device is an important teaching principle used during the gatherings.

Mr. Parham would seat you in the ensemble where he thought proper. If you were a man, he would also introduce you to the other players in the ensemble (all of whom are men at present). If you were a woman, you would be tuned and seated but probably not introduced. However, Mr. Parham has remarked: "I'd like t' git more women t' try t' learn t' play..." (8/26/73). Once when a woman fiddler did appear at Parhams' as a guest of one of the regular participants, Mrs. Parham, usually reluctant to make suggestions to the musicians, requested: "Play one or two of the ole tunes that she can play..." (7/20/73). So a sympathetic attitude toward the possibility of women playing there does seem implicit. Of course, the ballads of women singers have predominated in the many printed collections by ballad scholars researching the region for over fifty years. But according to informants at Parhams', earlier instrumental music gatherings excluded women.

If anyone brings an instrument and then hangs back shyly, possibly intimidated by the proficiency of more experienced players, Parham usually tries to encourage him to participate. At one point he said: "You want to play one? He's [gesturing toward the leader] real easy t' play with" (8/17/73). Or again to compliment a beginner after he has succeeded in keeping up with the group during a piece, someone remarks: "I hyerd you that time, Junior!" (2/5/72). And if the novice gets to the point of being skilled enough to take a "break," that is, a melodic solo in alternation with the leader, he may be reseated closer to the leader. Parham directs this change in status by saying something like: "Bring that banjer up here t' where we can hear it." Thus an environment encouraging participation is extended to include apprentices as well as more experienced players. That such sympathetic surroundings are essential to the support of learning and creating is disclosed in interviews with many players at Parhams'. They

will have heard of the gatherings through someone else, for example: "...met somebody at a Parham family reunion who talked about the music there." But it was sometime later before this informant "Got up enough nerve to come over...afraid o' bein a drag on the group..." (8/24/73).

Not everyone who goes to Parhams' gets involved playing music. If you were not planning to play in the group, you would still be introduced to Mrs. Parham. But she would by-pass the introduction to her husband if you did not carry an instrument. This omission seems a result of the fact that Mr. Parham is generally involved in playing with the ensemble. To interrupt him during the crucial activity of the evening, the musical event, would not be appropriate unless another player arrives. She may very well introduce you to him later if he stops playing for a while. Meantime, she would introduce you to everyone else except the musicians. This includes wives of musicians, some musicians who might be sitting with the non-musicians, and perhaps other people who simply come to listen. Some of these listeners, mostly older men, come as regularly as the musicians. A half dozen children are generally present, too. They vary in age from small crawling infants who circulate in and out under the chairs of the adults to teenagers who rove in and out of the house or sometimes break spontaneously into buck dancing or clogging.

The people who come mainly to listen or visit together usually sit in an adjoining room because of lack of space in the music area. Conversations in that room range from neighborhood gossip to politics, and to discussions about how to follow the "signs" in planting and harvesting gardens and in killing and curing meats. One of the older fiddlers often joins this group, saying that his place is "with the ladies," rather than among the musicians. Having seated himself in their company, he proceeds to amuse everyone with an extensive repertory of local anecdotes, stories, and jokes. Some of the humor, being slightly risqué, he seems to indulge in to enjoy the reaction of the women who laugh silently with their hands over their mouths in order not to be caught. The practicing of oral conversational arts in this room blends with the total educating process constantly unfolding at Parhams'.

In the room with the music a semi-circle of fiddlers is spread against two of the walls. Opposite them, in another corner, stands a string bass player. The remainder of the ensemble sits facing the fiddlers, with a lead banjo player and a lead guitarist closest, almost bumping knees with the fiddlers. One becomes aware, as the evening progresses, that certain fiddlers, more skilled than the others, emerge as leaders.

When the musicians are tuned and ready to play, the lead fiddler will often start without announcing any tune title. He may signal the beginning by playing a repeated chord on the rhythm of an eighth and two sixteenth

notes—a long note followed by two short ones in the same time interval—to inform everyone of the key and tempo of his selection. This introductory rhythmic figure, called a “single shuffle” by the players, is also described as “rubbin’ it off.” If the leader chooses not to begin with such a repeated figure, another option is to start with the first phrase or two of the piece and everyone follows once they recognize the tune. If the tune is unfamiliar to the group, once the key is recognized, the guitarists and bass player will usually play a light accompaniment until they have heard the entire tune through once. Other fiddlers, if the tune is new to them, will simply listen or, as the piece becomes more familiar, they may play along softly in an improvised harmony. These are musicians who learn “by ear” a great variety of music. Music in print is not used here. Once they have learned the basic frame of a certain tune, they will then improvise and add to it what they often call their own “arrangements.”

Another way of introducing a piece may be verbally, as for instance, when Mack Snoderly, one of the lead fiddlers, asked one evening: “Do you know *Bear Creek*? This is Anna’s [his three-year-old daughter’s] favorite tune; this is the only one she ever paid any attention to...” (7/20/73). He then began to play the piece. A fourth way that a piece may be introduced is to announce a new key, contrasting with the one in which they may already have played several tunes. In such a case the leader might say: “This un’s in G.”

Choice of key may also serve as an excuse not to play a piece should someone other than Parham, or a lead fiddler, attempt to press the group into playing a favorite. Within the group dynamics of this ensemble there is a hierarchy. The leader prevents his control from being usurped by employing a subtle refusal. He explains: “That’s in A, we’re in G right now.” Eventually the request will probably be honored. While maintaining control, the leaders do not function to initiate the practice of exclusion. They exemplify sensitivity and responsiveness to each other as well as to their audience.

Occasionally someone among the musicians, not a leader, will go ahead and start a piece of his choice before a leader decides to answer a request. This can happen if he is playing a melody instrument such as a banjo or fiddle. Accompanying instruments such as the guitars may go ahead and play very lightly with him, hesitating to let him down altogether. But the accompaniment usually fades out after a couple of times through the tune. Again, no overt critical statements are made. But inappropriate behavior has been signaled by the “drop-outs” and the upstart quickly finds a convenient ending for his moment of indiscretion.

The status of a leader is gained in this setting by musicians with a combination of attributes. Briefly, these include an extensive repertory of

melodies generally numbering in the hundreds. Coupled with this knowledge is the musical skill needed to execute the music so that others can play along. In addition, they possess certain personality characteristics. These include tact, a willingness to teach others, and an ability to tap an energy flow and transform it into active music-making in the ensemble context. The only person more important than these leaders is Parham himself. He is catalytic at all times, stimulating the many dimensions of the kaleidoscopic event. His own personality is similar to those of the leaders.

Standards of musicianship are presented for the first time to many learners in this setting. At the same time, the experienced players may be tactfully reminded of them should they be forgotten or neglected. For instance, Mack Snoderly, an acknowledged lead fiddler, played a tune one evening at such a fast speed that the ensemble could not keep pace and the performance became ragged and the beat irregular. At this point, the corrective comment from within the group was: "Mack, you must have practiced that one in the basement!" The implication here is that the liquor is usually stored there and that no sober person would lose control of the music that way. At Parham's, by the way, only coffee and carbonated drinks are consumed during the evening, along with snacks of sandwiches and cakes brought and shared communally by the participants. One fiddler, a newcomer here, listed this as one of the reasons he was attracted to the group. He said he left a band he had been playing with regularly because "them fellers was always a-poppin' th' tops off them ole beer cans."

After the playing of a new piece, someone in the group will often say: "That's real pretty, that's pretty on the bass, too; where'd you learn that?" (7/12/72). The leader's response would be to give a title, possibly several, for they vary considerably even within limited geographical boundaries. Then the leader might state where he first heard the melody, explaining: "It was around and I just picked it up," or, more specifically, "I learned it off a Howdy [Howard] Forrester tape" (7/23/72). One evening someone explained: "I heard Joe Green play it at a festival...." To which another fiddler added: "Whatever came of Joe Green? He'll get drunk sure as the world, but he *can* play" (7/23/72). The foregoing illustrations suggest the variety of sources from which these musicians draw the melodies they choose to play. Besides the older traditional person-to-person contacts, they now have access to media resources such as phonograph and tape recordings, and so the teaching-learning-creating process in the twentieth century develops new dimensions.

Everyone, listeners and musicians, seems to enjoy hearing new pieces or new variations of older tunes laced into the musical texture of the evening.

To signal that a new piece has been introduced, and indirectly to compliment the fiddler who played it, someone might say: "Tommy's just learnt that one up" (8/24/73). If another fiddler likes the tune well enough to want to learn it himself he may say to the leader: "Play that part with the run so I can hear it again." This usually results in another complete rendition of the piece rather than breaking it down into smaller phrases which is expected.

At Parhams' there is no established order for any individual pieces during the evening or for an exchange of control by different leaders. But if a leader starts in a certain key he will probably play three or four pieces in that key before changing. The music he leads may include several of the faster instrumental tunes like *Johnny the Blacksmith* (traditional) and *This 'n That* (traditional), both in the key of A Major. A slower vocal piece may follow in that same key, often sung in harmony by Parham, his brother Fred, and Woody McCanness, a guitarist. An example of such a song might be the traditional *Bonnie Blue Eyes*.

The performance of instrumental pieces far exceeds that of the vocal selections during the sessions, which usually last about four hours. As a part of this study, complete listing of the repertory at Parhams' was made covering a representative number of Fridays beginning on Friday, February 5, 1972, and extending over eighteen months through Friday, August 20, 1973. This survey revealed a total of ninety different selections that were played the majority of Fridays. The regular leaders for specific pieces were also noted. The repertory study disclosed the following. First, an even distribution and balance of fiddler leadership is evidently perceived as a priority in this setting. This balance is partly controlled by overt suggestions by Parham and partly by a covert, often unspoken, control of group dynamics. Second, the process includes variety within a unified event supported by the evidence that several fiddlers may have different arrangements of the same pieces or they may have certain pieces which only they choose or are encouraged to lead. This suggests that a priority of the teaching aspect of this event is the encouragement of flexibility and plasticity in the development of individual fiddling styles and the establishment of aesthetic values favoring creativity in the treatment of a wide variety of musical materials. Third, only ten of the total ninety pieces were vocal, that is, songs of more than one stanza. A good number of the fiddle tunes are performed in this setting with an opening verse or a stanza interpolated within the piece. But these fall well within the classification of instrumental music. The vocal pieces included such selections as Asa Martin's *Hot Corn*, *Cold Corn*, B. L. Lunsford's "golden oldie" *Mountain Dew*, Bill Monroe's *Kentucky Waltz*, older traditional songs such as *Corinna*, *Corinna*, and John Denver's recent million-dollar

national hit, *Country Roads*. Although the melodic lines and texts were undoubtedly learned from phonograph recordings, none of them as performed at Parhams' could be conceived of as slavish imitations of the original performances.

Finally, the repertory study reveals that these musicians are exceedingly eclectic in their exploration of both vocal and instrumental music. They play recent bluegrass compositions by Flatt and Scruggs side by side with old English sword dance melodies. They are fond of sentimental love songs of the 1920's and 30's which they follow with favorite old revival hymns like *The Old Rugged Cross*. They also play ragtime tunes and Dixieland blues, like W. C. Handy's *St. Louis Woman*. They do not themselves classify their selections into genre, as I have done here.

Considered within the learning process, these are pieces in which the entire ensemble participates. They become the evidence of the products of a creative human process. The musicians who only *follow* during sessions at Parhams' often go out with their own bands and *lead* the same pieces, altered by their own interpretive imaginations during other events.

After the musicians leave Parhams' they never perform elsewhere as members of this same maxi-ensemble. Instead, there are several spin-off bands which play at local dance halls, private parties, and dozens of fiddlers' conventions and bluegrass festivals.

The exceptionally faithful attendance at Parhams' is testimony to the "success" of this educational context. It may well have the lowest drop-out rate of any educational institution in the region! It may be that this educational experience also provides an almost meditative or therapeutic experience. Some of the musicians say that they go there "tired out from work." But once they are there "time moves differently...almost like bein in a trance," and they leave refreshed.

Certainly the process which unfolds at Parhams' includes much more than the product of musical sounds. A microcosm of Appalachian society may be present. If so, the creative interaction there, reinforcing certain artistic and social values and encouraging change in others, has many implications for those attempting Appalachian studies today.

NOTES

¹All quotations in this paper are transcribed from taped interviews or music evenings at Parhams' or from individuals involved in the gatherings. Dates are included in parentheses following the quotations. Tapes are presently stored in the writer's private archive.

The Southern Mountain Vocabulary in the Low Country of South Carolina and Georgia

RAYMOND K. O'CAIN
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Despite Noah Webster's vigorous advocacy of American linguistic independence from England, men of letters were slow to recognize the legitimacy of the English spoken in America.¹ The English of London had become the standard by which other varieties of English were judged well before the settlement of America. The speech of London was not "purer" English in any sense; it was instead a mixture of words, pronunciation patterns, and grammatical constructions typical of several regions of England, along with a number of words borrowed from various other languages, overlaid on the indigenous speech of the English East Midlands. Because the most important and influential people used it, the speech of London attained the status of a standard.² The "correctness" of a word, pronunciation, or grammatical form is not absolute, of course, but derives from the status of the people who use it. American English, like other varieties of English that differed from the speech of London, was, quite naturally, the object of adverse commentary.

Processes similar to those that had produced the standard of London were operating in each of the American colonies; in fact, they were operating more or less independently in each colony, since the colonies had closer communication with England than they did with one another.³ The result was that in each colony a distinct dialect evolved; for each colony had a unique combination of settlers who spoke various English dialects, and in each colony there were unique influences from languages other than English. In each colony there were also independent adaptations of the existing vocabulary to describe conditions of life unknown in England: sometimes new words were coined, sometimes the meanings of existing words were modified, and sometimes words were borrowed from other languages.⁴

There were other factors contributing to the complexity of the American linguistic situation beyond the matter of the mixture of British

dialects. The passage of time alone would cause British and American English to diverge, since the passage of time always results in linguistic change. Furthermore, since settlers came to America over an extended period of time, we must consider the blending of temporal varieties as well as the blending of regional varieties. Moreover, since the social origins of the settlers were generally modest, they did not even speak the "best" varieties of their native regions in England; consequently, as settlers achieved prominence in the New World, socially disfavored speech patterns became legitimized. The social and geographical mobility characteristic of America meant that the processes of dialect mixture would continue as new regions were occupied. And the sheer size of the North American continent insured that regional dialects would flourish and endure, for no dialect could dominate America in the way the dialect of London dominated England.

American English has been recognized as a subject for serious study less than a century. Apparently the most important impetus for the study of American speech was the vogue among American writers for portrayals of local and regional speech in the 19th century. At the same time, there was also the example of the English Dialect Society, founded in 1873, whose collections were the basis of Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary*. An American Dialect Society was founded in 1889 and had as its aim the compilation of an American counterpart to Wright's work.⁵

The dialects of New England were "firstest with the mostest" in attracting the attention of specialists, but Southern dialects—especially mountain speech—held a secure second place. These important early observations of American dialects, many of them published in *Dialect Notes*, the journal of the American Dialect Society, often occurred by happenstance, the secondary results of scholarship in literary criticism or folklore. Still, it was the overall interpretation rather than the validity of the early evidence that was called into question.

It was commonly assumed that there was a linguistic Mason-Dixon Line setting off Northern and Southern speech. Within the Northern speech area, eastern New England was a well-defined subarea, as was the Southern Mountain area within the Southern dialect. Except for the Gulf States, the territory west of the Appalachians was considered less localized and largely undifferentiated in speech. This sort of speech was termed Western or General American.⁶ Though Texas and Minnesota both lie in the General American speech area, it is doubtful that many Americans would agree that Lyndon B. Johnson and Hubert H. Humphrey spoke the same dialect. Specialists in dialectology regard General American as a catch-all for dialects that have not been studied in sufficient detail to make clear their relationships to other dialects.

Hans Kurath was one of the first scholars to question the validity of a dialects map which recognized only three dialects—New England, Southern, and General American. Kurath was chosen in 1928 to direct the Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada, a nationwide dialect survey initiated by the Linguistic Society of America and the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the American Council of Learned Societies.⁷ The Linguistic Atlas was a comprehensive plan to test the actual regional distribution of dialect characteristics by on-the-spot interviews with natives of selected communities. Realizing that regional speech traits appeared in cities and in the speech of the well-educated, Kurath insisted that the North American survey, unlike its predecessors in Europe, not be limited to the speech of uneducated persons in rural areas. On the eastern seaboard alone, over 700 communities were sampled, and interviews with more than 1600 persons were conducted by highly trained investigators.

The interviews averaged about eight hours in length, for a questionnaire of more than 800 tests of regional aspects of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar had been assembled from reports on regional speech like those in *Dialect Notes*. To provide a large body of data for purposes of comparison, the same questions were asked of each person interviewed. Instead of asking directly, "what do you call andirons around here?" which might elicit an atypical response, the interviewer might ask, "what do you use to hold the logs in the fireplace?"; to find out how words like *white*, *yellow*, or *yolk* were pronounced, the investigator might ask, "what are the parts of an egg?" So that a line of questioning would proceed smoothly, the questions were arranged topically and sequentially, on matters like foods, the farmstead and household, domestic animals, containers and utensils, the weather, and the like. Often the person being interviewed would talk at length on such a topic or relate stories and anecdotes, in which case the investigator would make his notes from the conversation, resorting to questions only to fill in gaps.

Once the data from such a survey have been collected and edited, the responses can be plotted on maps. This practice gives a very vivid indication of dialect areas, for if the geographical extent of several items is approximately the same, a dialect boundary can be established. The first large-scale attempt to delineate the dialect areas of the territory of colonial settlement was Hans Kurath's *Word Geography of the Eastern United States*.

Kurath found three rather than two major dialect areas on the eastern seaboard; a distinctive Midland area lay between the Northern and Southern dialects. Kurath identified not only three major areas but also numerous subareas. Dialect boundaries did not follow state lines, but, as

Kurath was careful to point out, correlated with settlement areas and population movements. Although Kurath's delineation of dialect areas is based on vocabulary alone, subsequent research has shown that patterns of pronunciation and grammar coincide rather closely.⁸

With this view of dialect studies in mind, we turn now to our own research, which is squarely within the interpretive framework established by Kurath. The speech of the Southern mountains is popularly conceived of as a survival from an earlier time. If traits generally attributed to mountain speech could be found elsewhere in contemporary society, a better understanding of the relationship of mountain culture to other cultures might come about. Accordingly, we shall seek evidence of the mountain vocabulary in other areas.

We will assume that a word is representative of the mountain vocabulary if it appears in four or more reports from eastern Tennessee, eastern Kentucky, southwestern Virginia, or western North Carolina. We consulted word lists published in the period 1886-1927, which include not only the earliest word lists, but all those published in *Dialect Notes*. When our tentative list of representative words was assembled, we set aside those not investigated for the Linguistic Atlas, whose archives and reports we consulted to find evidence of the mountain vocabulary in other regions.⁹

For several reasons we have chosen to look for mountain words in the South Carolina low country and coastal Georgia. The relative proximity of the mountains to the low country makes comparisons both inevitable and interesting. By the time the mountains were settled, the plantation system was well established in the low country, and the settlement histories are strikingly different. It would be difficult to find a more vivid contrast than that between the mountaineer and the planter; and the low country is also known as a distinctive speech area. For the seventeen counties of the South Carolina low country, there are eighty-two Linguistic Atlas field records, and for the eighteen counties of the Georgia coastal area, there are fifty Linguistic Atlas field records.

We shall examine in detail the geographical distribution of the ten vocabulary items that were both most frequently cited in early word lists of mountain speech and investigated for the Linguistic Atlas as well. Of these ten, four had been previously discussed by Kurath in his *Word Geography*, but since the South Carolina and Georgia collections were incomplete when that work went to press in 1949, we hope to add something to that earlier treatment.

From the mountain word lists, *plumb* meaning "entirely" was encountered five times, and *clean*, with the same meaning, was cited once.¹⁰ Kurath confirms *plumb* as a mountain term in rather general use, though

clean is also found in the mountains. In the Southern area he delimited, Kurath shows *clean* prevalent in the territory from the Potomac to the Pee Dee.¹¹ *Plumb* and *clean*, both found in the mountains, occur in the low country of South Carolina and Georgia, where they compete with other forms found on the coast, *jam* and *slam*, as well as with *clear*, found everywhere. (The southern limit of *clean* has been extended appreciably.)

Though falling short of the required four citations, the variety of terms for male domestic animals is so significant as to warrant a closer look, since the terms are all euphemistic. For *bull* there are *male*, *male brute*, *male cow*, and *cow brute*; for *ram* there are *male* and *buck*; and for *boar* there is *male hog*.¹²

Euphemistic terms for *bull* are used everywhere in the East except Pennsylvania and New York State. Kurath shows for the mountains the forms *male cow*, *cow brute*, *male brute*, and *brute*.¹³ The South Carolina-Georgia low country lacks *brute* in any form, but does share *male* and *male cow* with the mountains; there are also *stock*, *stock beast*, *male beast*, *stock bull*, and *steer*.

For *ram*, Kurath shows *buck*, and rarely, *buck-sheep* in the mountains.¹⁴ Both of these, as well as *he-sheep* and *male sheep*, occur in coastal South Carolina; only *male sheep* has currency in coastal Georgia.

No mountain terms were offered for *stallion*, but we note in passing that *stud* and *stud horse* appear to be the prevailing terms in the South Carolina-Georgia low country with *sire*, *male*, *male horse*, and *seed horse* as minor variants.

The mountain word *male hog* is also the most prevalent term in both South Carolina and Georgia. *Male*, *stock hog*, and *male boar* are the competing forms, although *male boar* is rare, and *stock hog* is decidedly more common in South Carolina than in Georgia.

The expression *agin* (I get there) is cited seven times in the mountain word lists.¹⁵ Though *by the time* (I get there) is found over the whole seaboard, Kurath indicates that *agin* (I get there) is particularly common in the mountains.¹⁶ *Agin* is very rare in the low country of South Carolina and Georgia. The corresponding *time* (I get there), omitting *by the*, is relatively widespread in the area, but not universally used.

For *take*, *see*, or *escort* (you home), the word lists report *carry* (you home).¹⁷ Kurath indicates it is widespread in his Southern area, and that its appearance in the mountains of North Carolina is due to diffusion inland from the coast.¹⁸ *Carry* (you home) is nearly universal in the low country.

For a dog of uncertain ancestry, *fice* appears to be a typical mountain term.¹⁹ *Fice* is also well established in the Georgia low country, but not especially common in the South Carolina low country. Though its status in

South Carolina is uncertain, it appears to be passing out of use.

Well documented in mountain speech for "not a single one" is *ary* or *nary*.²⁰ While interviews indicate only a small number of these forms—*ary*, for example, did not appear in the Georgia area at all—it is likely that social factors such as education account for their absence among many of those interviewed for the Linguistic Atlas. The geographical spread of the forms suggests that they were probably even more widespread at an earlier time.

Mountaineers are reported to say *belongs to* for *ought to*, as in "He belongs to be more careful."²¹ *Belongs to* is current in both South Carolina and Georgia, though somewhat more common in the latter.

It is reported that *foreigner* is the term used for the more usual *stranger* or *outsider* in the mountains.²² *Foreigner* is less common in South Carolina than in Georgia, but like *ary* and *nary*, its geographical distribution is suggestive of more general use at an earlier time.

For the notion "courting," *talking to*, *setting up to*, *setting up with*, and *sparking* are reported from the mountains.²³ *Setting up to* is found much more often in South Carolina than in Georgia, though still rather rare there. *Sparking* is the most common term in both states, but *flying around* and *sporting* are significant minor variants, though more common in South Carolina.

Finally, *tote* is reported as a mountain usage, though *pack* also occurs.²⁴ In the South Carolina-Georgia low country *pack* is unknown and *tote* is virtually universal.

In summary, it can be seen that virtually every word cited as characteristic of the Southern mountains also shows up in the plantation country of South Carolina and Georgia. It is not surprising that the mountain words *carry*, meaning "to escort," and *tote* are nearly universal in the coastal area. Neither is it surprising that terms for ram are rare in Savannah and Charleston, colonial cities not known for raising sheep.

While it is not our purpose to trace the history of these mountain words in the vocabularies of the low country, one or two examples of this kind should prove illuminating. Both *carry* and *tote* were once standard English usages. That we suspect these and certain other usages were once more generally used than they are now is supported not only by the present evidence cited here, but by the historical evidence as well. Both *carry* and *tote* appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. *Carry* in the sense of "escort" was known in England as early as 1513, and we can assume that the spoken form antedates this written testament by many years. The usage is also to be found in the 1611 King James Bible. *Carry* was clearly a standard British form at the time of the earliest American settlements, appearing not only in the Bible, but in the works of Shakespeare, Pepys, and

Johnson as well. Its introduction into this country was equally clear as a part of the standard language. No less a personage than Benjamin Franklin used *carry* in his autobiography: "my father carried his wife...to New England."

Tote, on the other hand, is cited by the *OED* as an American dialectal form, but this has not always been the case. The first citation of *tote* dates from 1676 in eastern Virginia. Numerous uses of the word in New England are also recorded in the *OED*. The Linguistic Atlas of New England shows *tote* to be in common usage in every state, though not the predominant term in any.²⁵

What can be inferred from the historical evidence is this: *carry* existed in England in its current sense of "escort" well before the colonization of America. In America that use of *carry* was less common, but still common enough to be included in the second and third editions of *Webster's New International Dictionary* (and the latter's popular derivative, *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*), in which it is labeled "dialectal," meaning that it is not the standard form everywhere.

Other mountain terms are to be found in England as well. *Nary*, according to the *OED*, "is typically U.S., but apparently appears in some English dialects...." *Clean* meaning "completely" is cited in England by the *OED* as early as 1420; *plumb* in the same sense is cited from 1748. Even *agin*, meaning "before" or "by the time," but without the initial vowel, is cited by the *OED* in England in the early 18th century.

The widespread presence of these forms, as well as others which could be similarly treated, in the mountain regions of the South Midland and the Lower South (not to mention New England) bears witness to the historical roots of these areas in England or to the English influence in these areas. Further investigation reveals further evidence of migration routes as well as social structure. The historical evidence is confirmed by more recent investigations. For example, we can reasonably assume that the first reports on mountain speech focused on those who were more localized in their speech habits. On the other hand, the persons interviewed for the Linguistic Atlas represent a younger, better educated generation: over half of them were not the oldest, least educated generation of their day. If the same words used by an older, more rustic generation of mountaineers appear in the speech of persons who are both younger and better educated, we can probably assume that in many cases these words were even more generally used at an earlier time.

NOTES

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We also wish to thank Linda Lineberger of the Atlas staff at the University of South Carolina for her assistance.

¹H. L. Mencken, *The American Language*, 4th ed., ed. and abr. by Raven I. McDavid, Jr. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963). Chapter 1 provides an extremely readable account.

²Albert C. Baugh, *A History of the English Language*, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), esp. 231-5.

³Hans Kurath, *A Word Geography of the Eastern United States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1949).

⁴Mencken, *The American Language*.

⁵Mencken, 60-3, 450-1. Frederic G. Cassidy, "Linguistic Regionalism and the Harmless Drudge," *PMLA*, 82 (1967), 12-19, gives an account of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*.

⁶Mencken, 454; and George P. Krapp, *The English Language in America* (1925; rpt. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1960).

⁷Only for the survey of New England has there been full publication of the Linguistic Atlas (Hans Kurath et al., *Linguistic Atlas of New England*, 3 vols [1939-43; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1972]); for the Upper Midwest, the data are being presented in somewhat abridged form (Harold B. Allen, *Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest* [Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1973]); there are summary volumes for the Atlantic Seaboard: Hans Kurath, *A World Geography*; E. Bagby Atwood, *A Survey of Verb Forms in the Eastern United States* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1953); Hans Kurath and Raven I. McDavid, Jr., *The Pronunciation of English in the Atlantic States* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1961).

Chapter IX in W. Nelson Francis, *The Structure of American English* (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1958), by Raven I. McDavid, Jr., is still the best introduction to the study of American dialects. Hans Kurath et al., *Handbook of the Linguistic Geography of New England*, 2nd ed. (New York: AMS Press, 1973) gives the methodology of the Linguistic Atlas in detail.

⁸Atwood, *A Survey of Verb Forms*, and Kurath and McDavid, *The Pronunciation of English*. Allen, *Linguistic Atlas*, and Albert H. Marckwardt, "Principal and Subsidiary Dialect Areas in the North-Central States," *Publication of the American Dialect Society*, 27 (1957), 3-15, have projected the boundary between Kurath's Midland and Northern areas westward. For extension of the Midland-Southern boundary, analysis of the data being collected for the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States is necessary for a definitive statement. That project is under the direction of Lee Pederson at Emory University.

⁹These materials are housed partly at the University of South Carolina and partly at the University of Chicago. These two institutions are cooperating to support the work of editing the Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States, initiated under the direction of Kurath to survey the areas of colonial settlement south of New England.

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¹⁰Charles Forster Smith, "On Southernisms," *Transactions [And Proceedings] of the American Philological Association*, 17 (1886), 34-46; [H. A. Edson and Edith M. Fairchild], "Tennessee Mountains," *Dialect Notes*, 1 (1894), 370-7; Abigail E. Weeks, "A Word List from Barbourville, Kentucky," *Dialect Notes*, 3 (1910), 456-7; J. M. Steadman, Jr., "A North Carolina Word List," *Dialect Notes*, 5 (1918), 18-21; and Josiah H. Combs, "Kentucky Items,"

Dialect Notes, 5 (1921), 118-19.

¹¹Kurath, *A Word Geography*, Fig. 87, 61.

¹²Horace Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina," *Dialect Notes*, 4 (1916), 407-19; Josiah H. Combs, "Old, Early, and Elizabethan English in the Southern Mountains," *Dialect Notes*, 4 (1916), 283-97; and L. R. Dingus, "Appalachian Mountain Words," *Dialect Notes*, 5 (1927), 468-71.

¹³Kurath, *A Word Geography*, Fig. 94, 62.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, Fig. 95, 62.

¹⁵Calvin S. Brown, Jr., "Dialectal Survivals in Tennessee," *MLN*, 4 (1889), 409-18; Weeks, "A Word List from Barboursville"; Hubert G. Shearin, "An Eastern Kentucky Dialect Word-List," *Dialect Notes*, 3 (1911), 537-40; L. R. Dingus, "A Word List from Virginia," *Dialect Notes*, 4 (1915), 178-93; Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina"; Combs, "Old, Early, and Elizabethan English"; and Steadman, "A North Carolina Word List."

¹⁶Kurath, *A Word Geography*, Fig. 160, 79.

¹⁷Charles Forster Smith, "On Southernisms," *Transactions [and Proceedings] of the American Philological Association*, 14 (1883), 42-56; A. P. Man, Jr., "Virginia," *Dialect Notes*, 4 (1914), 158-60; Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina"; and Steadman, "A North Carolina Word List."

¹⁸Kurath, *A Word Geography*, Fig. 163, 80.

¹⁹Smith, "On Southernisms" (1886); John P. Fruit, "Kentucky Words and Phrases," *Dialect Notes*, 1 (1890), 63-9; [Edson and Fairchild], "Tennessee Mountains"; and Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina."

²⁰[Edson and Fairchild], "Tennessee Mountains"; Weeks, "A Word List from Barboursville"; Man, "Virginia"; Dingus, "A Word List from Virginia"; and Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina."

²¹Shearin, "An Eastern Kentucky Dialect Word-List"; Man, "Virginia"; Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina"; and Steadman, "A North Carolina Word List."

²²[Edson and Fairchild], "Tennessee Mountains"; Shearin, "An Eastern Kentucky Dialect Word-List"; Combs, "Old, Early, and Elizabethan English"; and Kephart, "A Word-List from the Mountains of North Carolina."

²³John P. Fruit, "Kentucky Words," *Dialect Notes*, 1 (1891), 229-34; [Edson and Fairchild], "Tennessee Mountains"; Shearin, "An Eastern Kentucky Dialect Word-List"; and Mary O. Pollard, "Terms from the Tennessee Mountains," *Dialect Notes*, 4 (1915), 242-3.

²⁴Smith, "On Southernisms" (1886); Calvin S. Brown, Jr., "Other Dialectal Forms in Tennessee," *PMLA*, 6 (1891), 171-5; Shearin, "An Eastern Kentucky Dialect Word-List"; and Steadman, "A North Carolina Word List."

²⁵Kurath et al., *Linguistic Atlas of New England*, Map 165.